

# **THE *UDĀSĪS* IN THE COLONIAL PUNJAB 1849 A.D - 1947 A.D**

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**SUPERVISOR:**

**Dr. SULAKHAN SINGH**  
Professor  
Department of History  
Guru Nanak Dev University  
Amritsar.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**KIRANJEET SANDHU**  
Associate Professor  
P. G. Department of History  
D.A.V College  
Jalandhar.



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY  
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## **CERTIFICATE**

The work included in the thesis entitled **The *Udāsīs* in the Colonial Punjab 1849 A.D. - 1947 A.D.** submitted to the **Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, was carried out by Kiranjeet Sandhu at the **Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar**, under my supervision. This is an original work and has not been submitted in part or full for any other degree/diploma at this or any other University/Institute. This thesis is fit to be considered for the award of degree for Ph.D.

Dated :-

**Supervisor**

**Dr. Sulakhan Singh**  
Professor  
Deptt. of History,  
Guru Nanak Dev University,  
Amritsar.

## **CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that the thesis entitled **The *Udāsīs* in the Colonial Punjab 1849 A.D. - 1947 A.D.** is entirely my own work and all the ideas and references have been duly acknowledged.

**Dr. Sulakhan Singh**  
Professor  
Deptt. Of History,  
Guru Nanak Dev University,  
Amritsar.

**Kiranjeet Sandhu**

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## PREFACE

Sikhism had never been monolithic in its history of over five hundred years. It witnessed the emergence of various sectarian developments, whose roots may be traced as far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The most notable dissidents, who staked their claims for the *gaddi* of Guru Nanak at different times, were significantly the direct descendants of the Sikh Gurus. They included Baba Sri Chand, eldest of the two sons of Guru Nanak, whose followers were called the *Udāsīs*; Datu and Dasu, the sons of Guru Angad Dev; Mohan and Mohri, the sons of Guru Amar Das; Prithi Chand, eldest son of Guru Ram Das, whose followers were called the *Minas*; Dhir Mal, eldest son of Baba Gurditta (eldest son of Guru Hargobind), whose followers were called the *Dhirmalias*; and Ram Rai, eldest son of Guru Har Rai, whose followers were called the *Ram Rayias*. Significantly, among all the dissenting individuals and religious Orders, the *Udāsīs* alone survived as an important religious force to be reckoned with in Sikh history and religion. The *Minas*, the *Dhirmalias* and the *Ram Rayias* were excommunicated by Guru Gobind Singh, who ordered the Khalsa Sikhs not to have any kind of social relations with them.

As is the case of the *Udāsīs*, their pro-establishment stance as well as their being non-baptized not only perhaps enabled them to continue their missionary work as custodians of the historic Sikh shrines but also helped them escape the state persecution during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This probably fetched them more extensive revenue-free land grants (*dharmarths*) from the Sikh ruling classes, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors, which partially continued to the British times. Moreover, the *Udāsī* attempts to affiliate themselves with the early Sikh tradition also made them more popular and tolerable to the Sikhs. But during the Singh Sabha days, the *Udāsīs* were targeted by the Tat Khalsa, as they were very close to Hinduism. The Akali reformers launched their struggle against the *Udāsī Mahants* for reforms in the Sikh Shrines. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Akali-*Udāsī* conflict, the *Gurdwara* litigation and legislation, the *Udāsīs*'s attempts to stake their non-Sikh identity, and lastly, the continuous resumption of their *dharmarth* lands by the new rulers, gradually led to their weakening position. In all respects, thus, the *Udāsīs* were virtually on the verge of decline.

## I

For the completion of this work, very wide variety of the published and unpublished British records available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi; the Punjab State Archives, Patiala; the Financial Commissioner's Revenue Records at Chandigarh; Records in the Deputy Commissioner's library at Amritsar and Jalandhar, available in the form of *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, *Home/Political files*, *Settlement Reports*, *Census Reports*, *District Gazetteers*; *All India Reporter*; Judicial Decisions of Lahore High Courts; and the Judgments of the Privy Councils, have been used critically and judiciously. The *Udāsī* and non-*Udāsī* literature and the *Panda-Vahi* records available at Haridwar, too, have been used objectively and corroborated with the contemporary official sources.

## II

The first chapter deals with the early history of the *Udāsīs*. It contains the history of the *Udāsīs* from Baba Sri Chand to the annexation of the Punjab by the British. Among the non-Sikh literary sources, the Persian chronicles contain little information for constructing historical biography of Baba Sri Chand. These accounts, however, provide scattered information on the *Udāsīs*, especially Baba Sri Chand, who lived the life of an ascetic. In the second chapter, the *Udāsī* Establishments in relation to their numbers, distribution and relative significance have been studied. It brings together the existence, growth and fall in the number of *Udāsī* establishments. The third chapter deals with the aspect of State Patronage to *Udāsī* individuals and institutions and the British rulers's policy regarding the *Udāsīs* and the extensive revenue-free land grants enjoyed by them during the period of Sikh rule. In the fourth chapter, the administrative structure of the *Udāsī* institutions has been studied. The fifth chapter explains beliefs and practices of the *Udāsīs* and their changing attitudes in the colonial period. The sixth chapter covers the literary works on and by the *Udāsīs* compiled from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also highlights their historical value for understanding different aspects of *Udāsī* history in particular and the history of the Punjab in general. In the seventh chapter the Gurdwara Reform Movement and the position of the *Udāsī Mahants* has been studied in detail. The aspect of the Akali-*Udāsī* conflict, the Gurdwara litigation and legislation, and the

*Udāsīs*'s attempts to stake their non-Sikh identity, too, have been discussed. It may be added here that all the non-English words have been italicized and the diacritical marks on them have been avoided, except the word *Udāsīs*, being the main subject of this work.

### III

For the present work, I am indebted not only to my supervisor, Dr. Sulakhan Singh, for his constant guidance and valuable suggestions, enabling me to work to the best of my abilities and capabilities, but also to his family, who always provided me a warm atmosphere during all stages of my work. He guided me in the organization and utilization of the sources in right perspective in an objective manner. I am also grateful to Dr. Harinder Singh Chopra, Chief Librarian, Bhai Gurdas Library, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, for providing me the opportunity to consult the rare source material relating to my work. My thanks are due to the library staff of the Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University; Sikh Reference Library, Golden Temple; Sikh History Research Department, Khalsa College, Amritsar; Deputy Commissioner's Libraries at Amritsar and Jalandhar; the Punjab State archives, Patiala; librarian of the main library of the Punjabi University, Patiala; Library staff of several other Public Institutions, such as the Punjab Civil Secretariat Library and Financial Commissioner's Record Office, at Chandigarh; Punjab University Library, Chandigarh; the National Archives of India and Nehru Memorial Museum Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi. Also, I am very much indebted to Dr. K. L. Sachdeva, who inspired me to undertake this challenging work.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not thank my husband, Sardar Dilbag Singh Randhawa, District Commandant, for his constant encouragement and support during the entire period. Unconditional love of my daughters Sargam, Taranum and son Danish always made me comfortable at difficult moments and for which they deserve my heartfelt gratitude and lots of love.

## CHAPTER- I

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In Sikh history, the term *Udāsī* firstly refers to the travels or missionary tours of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and secondly, it signifies an Order of ascetics founded by Baba Sri Chand (1494-?), the elder son of Guru Nanak.<sup>1</sup> Originally, it is derived from the Sanskrit word *Udās* or *Udāsīn*, i.e., one, who is indifferent to or disregards worldly attachments, or is stoic or a mendicant.<sup>2</sup> *Udāsī*, literally means sorrow, sadness, disappointed ones, dejected, withdrawn from worldly concerns. W.H. Mcleod writes that the *Janamsakhis*, the hagiographical literature of the Sikhs, refer to the word *Udāsī* denoting the missionary tours of Guru Nanak, possibly because these trends were understood as withdrawal from worldly activities.<sup>3</sup> In modern Sikh usage, the term designates an Order of ascetics who revere the *Guru Granth Sahib* and claim Sri Chand as their founder.<sup>4</sup> The followers of Sri Chand gradually came to be known as the *Udāsīs*. They revered Guru Nanak, preached his message, and recited the *bani* of the Sikh Gurus, yet retained their separate identity. C.H. Payne writes that though for many years, Nanak led life of an ascetic, he did not advocate this practice to others. He taught that the dress of a *fakir* and acts of penance were not in themselves evidence of a life of purity, and that men could practice virtue while engaged in the ordinary business of the world as well, or even better than they could, by withdrawing to the seclusion of the desert or the mountains.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, S to Z, Punjabi University Patiala, Patiala, 1998, p. 377.

<sup>2</sup> Rattan Singh Jaggi, *Sikh Panth Vishavkosh*, Part-1, Gur Rattan Publishers, Patiala, 2005, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> W. H. Mcleod, *B40 Janamsakhis*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> *Hindi Vishavkosh*, Part II, Pracharni Sabha, Bhargav Bhushan Press, Varanasi, 1962, pp. 88-89; Also see, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, (ed) James Hastings, Vol. XII, T & T Clark, New York, 1958 (4<sup>th</sup> ed), pp. 504-05; *Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Punjab and Delhi, Part I (Report), Middleton and Jacob S.M., p. 185.

<sup>5</sup> C. H. Payne, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Department of Languages, Punjab, Patiala, 1970 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), pp. 27-28.



J.D. Cunningham took serious note of dissent in Sikhism listing over a dozen Sikh sects or Orders including the *Udāsīs* in his work on *History of the Sikhs*.<sup>6</sup> Before Cunningham, John Malcolm in his *Sketch of the Sikhs*, has mentioned Sri Chand and Lakhmi Chand as two sons of Guru Nanak. It is noteworthy that he has wrongly stated that Dharam Chand, as son of Sri Chand, founded the *Udāsī* sect. In fact, he did not even know that Sri Chand remained celibate throughout his life and Dharam Chand was the son of his brother, Lakhmi Chand.<sup>7</sup> Towards the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Syad Muhmmad Latif wrote that the second son of Guru Nanak, Lakhmi Chand, was blessed with two sons. The other son of Nanak, Sri Chand, became a *Fakir* (ascetic) and was the founder of the sect called *Udāsīs*.<sup>8</sup> H. H. Wilson, claims the *Udāsīs* to be the genuine disciples of Guru Nanak, yet they were indifferent to the worldly vicissitudes. According to Wilson also the *Udāsī* sect was established by Dharam Chand, the grandson of Guru Nanak.<sup>9</sup> It may be noted that both the writers, Malcolm and Wilson, failed to acknowledge the contribution of Sri Chand as the founder of the *Udāsī* sect, and assigned the honour to Dharam Chand, his nephew.

Max Arthur Macauliffe has understood the Sikhs in terms of *Sehajdharis* and the *Singhs*. The schismatics in his views were the *Udāsīs*, the *Minas* and the *Hindalis*.<sup>10</sup> Gokal Chand Narang writes that Sri Chand founded the *Udāsī* sect and instructed his followers to remain single, to have no fixed homes and to own no property.<sup>11</sup> Indu Bhusan Banerjee has added fresh information on the dissenters and he ascribes the origin of the sectarian

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<sup>6</sup> J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, S. Chand and Co., Delhi 1966, pp. 43, 49, 56, 60, Appendix XXI, pp. 347-349.

<sup>7</sup> John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, John Murray, London, 1812, pp. 7, 21.

<sup>8</sup> S. M. Latif, *History of the Punjab*, Eurasia Publishing House, New Delhi, 1964, pp. 246-251.

<sup>9</sup> H.H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, vol., I, Asian Publication Services, New Delhi, 1976, pp. 267-269.

<sup>10</sup> Max Arthur Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Its Sacred Writings and Authors*, vol., I, S. Chand and Co., Delhi, 1963, pp. III, XXIX, XXX.

<sup>11</sup> Gokul Chand Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, New Book Society of India, New Delhi, 1956, p. 32.

developments to the principle of hereditary succession introduced at the time of the pontification of Guru Arjan Dev. He writes that the difficulties of the early successors of Guru Nanak were ‘by no means serious’. The Guru could effectively control the entire organization of the *Sangats* through the *Masands* and the ‘solidarity of Sikhism’ was not impaired.<sup>12</sup> J. S. Grewal is of the view that Banerjee’s conceptualization of dissent in Sikhism before the martyrdom of Guru Arjan is not adequate. The principle of nomination was never discarded by the nominated successors of Guru Nanak. It can be argued that the idea of the unity of Guruship enabled Guru Ram Das to nominate his son as successor. He introduced the principle of familial succession not to replace the principle of nomination but in addition to that principle. The two principles in combination undermined the strength of heredity which had been invoked by the heirs of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das.<sup>13</sup>

Among the Sikh scholars, Teja Singh and Ganda Singh are of the view that the new Order of preachers called the *Udāsīs*, attained more prominence due to the fact that the *Masands* had become corrupt. Coming to the later period of the Mughal rule, they reiterate that the *Udāsīs* alone functioned with the old trust and were found to be very useful as the custodians of the Sikh Shrines. In the darkest days of the Sikh history, when the regular Sikhs were away from their homes or were engaged in fighting, these ‘selfless monks’ kept the torch of Sikhism burning.<sup>14</sup>

As is the case of the modern historians of the Sikhs of the Post-Independence period, we find sufficient detail about the *Udāsīs* in their works on the Punjab or the Sikhs. J.S. Grewal, discussing the phenomenon of dissent in Sikhism during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, refers to I.B. Banerjee, who writes ‘The system of *Sangats* and *Masands* was supplemented under Guru Hargobind and his successors by several hearths (*dhuans*) and bounties (*bakshishes*) in which

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<sup>12</sup> Indu Bhushan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. I, A. Mukherjee and Co., Calcutta 1972, pp. 160-163, 262-263.

<sup>13</sup> J. S. Grewal, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, pp. 50, 54, 59.

<sup>14</sup> Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, vol., I, (1469-1765), Orient Longman’s Limited, Bombay, p. 113.

the *Udāsīs* were often made to play a prominent part.’ Similarly, W.H. Mcleod has also given useful references to the *Udāsīs* in his works.<sup>15</sup> With Sulakhan Singh’s recent work, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition* (1999),<sup>16</sup> we are now in a better position to know more about the *Udāsīs* in pre-colonial Punjab.

Guru Nanak in clear terms rejected the life of seclusion and withdrawal from the worldly affairs and attached much importance to the family life. His notion was based on the experience, which he had undergone during his life time. He had clearly pointed out the advantages of ‘domestic devotion’. His elder son, Sri Chand, had become an ascetic and he disapproved of it.<sup>17</sup> He continued his religious pursuits, without caring for the disapproval of his father. The other son, Lakhmi Chand took to a worldly life and his descendants are called the Bedis.<sup>18</sup> As both the sons did not adhere to the religious preaching of their father, Guru Nanak, the latter decided to nominate Guru Angad as his disciple-successor in 1539.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the dissent in early Sikhism began when Guru Nanak introduced the principle of nomination to succession<sup>20</sup>, on which was based the cardinal doctrine of the unity and continuity of Guruship.<sup>21</sup> Of the two sons of Guru Nanak, only the elder, Sri Chand, justified Guru Nanak’s fears, opposed the nomination and became the

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<sup>15</sup> W.H. Mcleod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*. Oxford: the Clarendon Press, London, 1968; *Early Sikh Tradition. A study of the Janam-sakhis*. Oxford: the Clarendon Press, London, 1980; *Sikhs and Sikhism*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, New Delhi, 1999; *The B40 Janam-Sakhi*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980.

<sup>16</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *The Udasis under Sikh rule (1750-1850)*, Ph.D Thesis, Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1985; *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, ABS Publications, Jalandhar, 1999.

<sup>17</sup> Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, S. Chand and Co., New Delhi, 1963, p. 319; I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, vol. I, A. Mukherjee and Co., Calcutta 1972, p. 160; S.M. Latif, *History of the Punjab*, Eurasia Publishing House (Pvt.) Ltd., New Delhi, 1964, p. 246.

<sup>18</sup> *Gazetteer of the Lahore District* 1883-84, P. 57

<sup>19</sup> J. S. Grewal, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Deptt. of History, G.N.D.U., Amritsar, 1982 (Revised), P. 51; Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, S. Chand & Co. New Delhi, 1963, XXX.

<sup>20</sup> I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of The Khalsa*, Vol-I pp-160-163.

<sup>21</sup> J.S. Grewal, "Legacies of the Sikh Past for the 20<sup>th</sup> Century", *Sikh History and Religion in 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, (ed.), By Joseph T. Colonnell Milton Israel Willard G. Oxtoby with visiting editors McLeod and J.S. Grewal, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 28-29.

founder of the *Udāsī* sect<sup>22</sup>. As the elder son of Nanak, he claimed himself to be the natural heir to *gurgaddi*. Though he was not installed on the *gaddi* of his father, yet he was recognized as a 'leader and prophet' by the *Udāsīs*, who refused to acknowledge the successor of Nanak as their *guru*.<sup>23</sup>

Guru Angad, who used the epithet Nanak in his compositions, declared that the gift of Guruship could be received from the Master and not by nominating oneself.<sup>24</sup> For Bhai Gurdas, succession through nomination was no ordinary succession. Guru Angad's insistence on the principle of nomination was directed against Sri Chand, who claimed to be the successor of Guru Nanak.<sup>25</sup> Even according to the law of inheritance, Sri Chand was the rightful claimant for *gurgaddi* and there were many who believed that Nanak's place should go to him. They refused to accept Angad's succession and began to create difficulties for him.<sup>26</sup> In order to avoid confrontation, Guru Angad left Kartarpur and went to settle at Khadur Sahib. Guru Amar Das, the successor of Guru Angad, in order to distinguish his sect from the *Udāsīs*, asked his followers to disassociate themselves from them.<sup>27</sup> Amar Das declared passive and recluse *Udāsīs* to be wholly separate from the active and domestic Sikhs, and thus finally preserved the infant church or state from disappearing as one of the many sects.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, Sikhism from the very beginning had to face dissensions. It witnessed the emergence of various religious groups or sectarian developments

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<sup>22</sup> J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, pp. 37, 43, 44.

<sup>23</sup> *Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Punjab and Delhi, Part I (Report), Middleton and Jacob S.M., p. 185

<sup>24</sup> *Adi Granth*, pp. 474-475.

ਏਹ ਕਿਨੇਹੀ ਦਾਤ ਆਪਸ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਪਾਈਐ  
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾ ਕਰਮਾਤਿ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੁਠੇ ਜੋ ਮਿਲੇ

<sup>25</sup> J.S. Grewal, "Legacies of the Sikh Past for the 20<sup>th</sup> Century", *Sikh History and Religion in 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>26</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1963 p. 49; H.R. Gupta, *History of the Sikh Gurus*, U.C. Kapur & Sons, New Delhi, 1973 p. 81.

<sup>27</sup> *Amritsar District Gazetteer*, 1914, Part A, P. 13; W. L. M' Gregor, *History of the Sikhs*, vol. I, Languages Department, Punjab, Patiala, 1970, p. 51.

<sup>28</sup> John Malcom, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p. 27; J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, P. 44 ; H.R. Gupta, *History of Sikh Gurus*, p. 83; I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, vol. I, A. Mukherjee and Co., Calcutta 1972, p. 162.

whose roots may be traced as far back as the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Among them, the most notable protesting for Guruship of the mainstream Sikhism were the *Udāsīs*, the *Minas*,<sup>29</sup> the *Dhirmalias*,<sup>30</sup> and the *Ramrayias*.<sup>31</sup> Among these, with passage of time, only the *Udāsīs* rose to prominence and gained more popularity, especially under Sikh rule. Sant Rein, an eminent *Udāsī* poet of the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, refers to them as *Nanakbans*.<sup>32</sup> They were patronized by the Mughal administrators in the early 18<sup>th</sup> and by the Sikh rulers in the late eighteenth century. They were more lavishly patronized by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>33</sup> Hence,

<sup>29</sup> The *Minas* were founded by Prithi Chand (1558-1618) eldest brother of Guru Arjan and son of Guru Ram Das. He desired to be chosen as the next Guru but his younger brother Arjan was appointed. The *Minas* were founded by Prithi Chand (1558-1618) eldest brother of Guru Arjan and son of Guru Ram Das. He desired to be chosen as the next Guru but his younger brother Arjan was appointed. This embittered Prithi Chand who tried to poison Hargobind, Arjan's only child. Prithi Chand set himself up as Guru in the absence of Arjan and Hargobind, and gained a following. These were called the *Minas* (dissenters, literally meaning 'unscrupulous scoundrels') by the Guru's real following. During the 17th century, due to their sympathies with the Mughal rulers, the *Minas* controlled Amritsar. Prithi Chand was succeeded by his son Mihran (1581-1640) who in turn was followed by Hariji who was able to keep Guru Tegh Bahadur away from entering the city. During the 18th century the *Minas* faded away, and were included in : the five dissenting groups that the Khalsa must reject. These are the *Minas*, *Masands*, *Dhir Malias*, *Ram Raiyas* and *Kuri-mars* (those who kill their daughters), or those who smoke tobacco: WWW. Mozilla Firefox; 17-09-2010 time 3.22 pm.

<sup>30</sup> The *Dhir Malias* were the followers of Dhir Mal (1627-1677), who was the eldest son of Gurditta, who in turn was the eldest son of Guru Hargobind. Dhir Mal, missing the Guruship ingratiated himself with the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. In 1643 he received a revenue-free grant and became a menace to Guru Hargobind by setting himself up as the next Guru, with an original copy of the *Adi Granth* in Kartarpur. He played a part in making Guru Tegh Bahadur withdraw to the Shivalik Hills.

<sup>31</sup> *Ram Raiyas* were the followers of Ram Rai (1646-87), who was the elder son of Guru Har Rai. Ram Rai changed a word of the *Adi Granth*, from a hymn that was seen to be demeaning to Muslims at the court of the Emperor Aurangzeb. This pleased the emperor and displeased Har Rai who expelled him. Ram Rai then set up a dera (camp/shrine) in the Dun valley from the grant given to him by Aurangzeb.

In the course of three centuries a number of Sikh sects sprang up but most of them have lost their importance- *Nirankaris*, *Nanakpanthis*, *Niranjanis*, *Suthra-Shahis*, *Sanmal-Shahis*, *Dhir Malias*, *Sevapanthis*, *Sat Kartaris*, *Nirmalas*, and others. The *Nihangs*, *Namdairs* and the *Udāsīs* were amongst the important groups: *The Gazetteer of India*, The Indian Union, Vol. I, Country and the People, August 1965 (Reprint) 1973, p. 486.

<sup>32</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS, 1858, Guru Nanak Heritage Centre and Archival Cell, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar ff 309 ab.

<sup>33</sup> J.S. Grewal, "Legacies of the Sikh Past for the 20<sup>th</sup> Century", *Sikh History and Religion in 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 30.

they could establish their *akharas* not only in the Punjab but also in other parts of the Indian sub-continent.

## I

The Persian chroniclers of the Mughal and Sikh times contain some important information for the reconstruction of the life and image of Baba Sri Chand. A Parsi writer, Zulfikar Ardistani or Maubid's *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*; Sujan Rai Bhandari's *Khulas-ut-Tawarikh*; Bhai Nand Lal's *Jot Bilas*; Rai Chatarman's *Chahar Gulshan*; Sayyad Ghulam Ali Khan's *Imad-u-Sa'adat*; Bakht Mal's *Khalsa Namah*; Khushwaqt Rai's *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*; Ghulam Mahy-ud-din's alias Bute Shah's *Tarikh-i-Punjab*; Mufti Ali-ud-din's *Ibrat Namah*; Ganesh Das Wadhera's *Char-Bagh-i-Panjab*; and Rattan Chand Lal's *Khalis Namah* find special mention in this context. Among these, Maubid was perhaps the first to take serious note of Guru Nanak and his *panth*. Whatever he wrote in *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* about the Sikhs was based upon the information supplied to him by the Sikhs themselves. According to him, the sons of Guru Nanak had been living in the Punjab. They were called *Kartari*. But he does not mention their names. Raghubir Singh states that the term '*Kartari*' has, no doubt, several meanings but in the given historical situation, it refers to a sect founded by a son of Guru Nanak, probably Sri Chand. The account also throws light on the fact that there existed two kinds of Orders i.e. one of the householders and the other of the ascetics. It was believed by the *Udāsīs* that Guru Nanak himself started the two *gaddis*, one was given to the house-holder Angad and the other to the celibate Sri Chand.<sup>34</sup>

Sujan Rai Bhandari's *Khulasa-ut-Tawarikh* (1697) deals with the general history of India from the earliest times to Aurangzeb's accession to the throne. In this account there is an incidental reference to the Sikh Gurus. Raghubir Singh writes that it seems probable that Baba Sri Chand had turned a

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<sup>34</sup> Raghubir Singh, "Baba Sri Chand and the Persian Chronicles", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1994, p. 67.

recluse even during the life time of Guru Nanak, and hence, he could not attract much attention of the chroniclers. Moreover, in this context, Bhai Nand Lal's *Jot Bilas*, Budh Singh Arora's *Risala Dar Ahwal-i-Nanak Shah* and Ghulam Hussain Khan's *Siyur-ul-Mutkharin* are notable.<sup>35</sup> Thus, very little information is available on the early life of Sri Chand in the Persian chronicles.

Most of these accounts agree that Sri Chand had turned ascetic. Though there is no direct information about the relations of Sri Chand with the Sikh Gurus, yet the accounts do indicate that, to some extent, he had compromised with them, from the time of Guru Ram Das onwards. The fact of popularity of the *Udāsīs* among the Sikh Sardars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is obvious that they enjoyed a lion's share from the *dharmarth* grants.<sup>36</sup> The accounts of Ganesh Das and Khuswaqt Rai contain several references to the *Udāsī* establishments situated in and outside the Punjab. Khushwaqt Rai's observation that 'this world is full of the *Udāsīs*' is sufficient to prove that they had adequate numerical strength during his times.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the *Udāsīs*'s predominance in Persian literature of the nineteenth century, sufficiently demonstrates their existence and popularity in the Punjab.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, for the purpose of reconstruction of historical biography of Sri Chand, some *Udāsī* and non-*Udāsī* works are available which include Pritam Das Nirban's *Udāsīn Sampardaya* (1921), Pandit Brahmanand Udasin's *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* (1923), Randhir Singh's *Udasi Sikhan di Vithya* (1959) and Pandit Shiv Ram Das Udasin's *Udasian Da Sacha Itihas* (1961). The general works on and by the *Udāsīs*, including some biographical works of Baba Sri Chand, consist of Lachhmi Devi's *Lachhmi Hulas Sagar* (1916), *Jiwni Baba Sri Chand* (1919), Bhai Buta Singh and Partap Singh's *Janamsakhi*

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<sup>35</sup> Raghbir Singh, pp. 68-69.

<sup>36</sup> Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 1978, see chapter 'Dharmarth' pp. 148-67; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in The Sikh Tradition*, ABS Publication, Jalandhar, 1999, p. 36.

<sup>37</sup> Raghbir Singh, "Baba Sri Chand and the Persian Chronicles", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 68-69.

*Baba Sri Chand*, Lal Singh Bansi's *Sri Chand Ji Sahib Ke Matre aur Sankbep Jiwan Charitar* (Lucknow 1905), Ishar Singh Nara's *Itihas Baba Sri Chand Sabib Ate Udasin Sampardaya* (1949), Bakhshis Singh Adil's *Jiwni Baba Sri Chand*, Amritsar (1978), Shiv Ram Udasin's *Sri Chand Avdhut Ki Janam Sakhi Ke Vachan*, (n.d.) and K.M. Munshi's *The Life of Baba Sri Chand* (n.d.), Mahant Kalyan Das's, *Itihas Maharaj Sri Chand Jagat Guruji Udasi Singhan Da* (1977), and *Sadhu Suman Chandrika*; Gianeshwra Nand Udasi's, *Sarotmiuni Charitamrit*; and Harbilas's *Sant Udasin Sarbodh*. These works are the products of the *Udāsīs*'s strained relations with the Akali Sikhs during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Obviously then, these works were written with some purpose and reflect sectarian bias and hence, they contain very little authentic information on the life and mission of Baba Sri Chand.

On the whole, thus, not much primary source material is available regarding the actual events of the life of Sri Chand. There are many myths and fables relating to his religious life and experiences which have been given much space by the *Udāsīs* in their religious literature. He lived for more than a century, and led most of his life in seclusion. It is said however, he had contacts with the Sikh Gurus from time to time. An attempt, therefore, has been made to construct the history of Sri Chand on the basis of the extant religious texts.

## II

Baba Sri Chand was born on *Bhadon Sudi* nine of *Samvat* 1551 i.e. 1494 A.D., at Sultanpur Lodi in Kapurthala district of the Punjab.<sup>39</sup> His mother Sulakhni

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<sup>39</sup> There is divergence of opinion regarding the age of Baba Sri Chand. Some hold that he breathed his last at the ripe age of 149 (1494-1643) years: Giani Ishar Singh Nara, *Itihas Baba Sri Chand Ji Sahib ate Udasin Sampardai*, Delhi, 1975, p. 1 and Mohinder Pal Kohli "Baba Sri Chand Man and his Mission" *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 47-48; Bhai Kirpal Singh, "Baba Sri Chand ji, Udasin Sampardai Ate Sikh Panth", Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 2007, p. 49; Many hold the view that he expired much before 1643. For instance see *Mahan Kosh*, Patiala. 1974, p. 251 which gives the year of his life span from 1494-1612; [www. Sikhnet.com](http://www.Sikhnet.com). the *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism and Macauliffe*: date 3/05/2010, Time, 12 am, mentions 1494-1629; *Encyclopaedia of Britannica eb.com*. Date 3/05/2010, Time 12.23am, mentions



was a great lady who did all she could to help him achieve his goal. Guru Nanak Dev, shared his experiences with Sri Chand at his very early age, stating mostly personal examples.<sup>40</sup> Thus, as a child, he formed the habit of rising early, bathing and spending long hours in meditation. He was told religious stories and was exposed to sermons to which he listened to very attentively. In 1501 A.D., when Sri Chand was seven years old, Guru Nanak Dev left for his first missionary tour or *Udāsī*. Sri Chand was placed under the care of Bebe Nanaki, Nanak's elder sister. He visited Pakhoke and Talwandi also, to meet his grand parents. After two years, he was invested with the sacred thread (*yajnopavita*), and was formally initiated into the *Vedic* literature by Pandit Hardayal.<sup>41</sup> At eleven years of age, he was sent to the famous school of Acharya Purshottam Das Kaul in Srinagar for a comprehensive study of the spiritual texts and here he remained for two and half years.

When Guru Nanak returned after completing his first *Udāsī*, he found Sri Chand, a lad of fifteen, very firm in his principles and fully devoted to meditation. During his brief stay at Sultanpur, before leaving for the second *Udāsī*, Guru Nanak gave maximum time to Sri Chand and blessed him with *Nam* as his first disciple. On return from the second *Udāsī*, Guru Nanak advised him to study *Vedas* and other *Shastras*, Indian holy books, to continue his religious education, though both sets of grandparents wanted him to enter business, in accordance with the family tradition. When Guru Nanak Dev returned from his third *Udāsī*, Sri Chand composed *Arta* in praise of his father.<sup>42</sup> Sri Chand visited Dawarka in Gujarat, and also travelled to Kashmir, Chamba, Sindh, Baluchistan, Kabul, Kandhar, Tibet (Kailash), Mansarovar, Nepal, Bhutan, besides Assam (Kamarupa) and Puri in the east and Somnath in the West delineating the principles of true *dharma* and spreading the message

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1494-1612.; [http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Baba\\_Sri\\_Chand#Sri\\_Chand\\_and\\_Sikhi](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Baba_Sri_Chand#Sri_Chand_and_Sikhi).

<sup>40</sup> Jai Raj *Udasin*, "Yogiraj Udasin Acharya Bhagwan Sri Chand-Ji: A legend of his times", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1994, p. 24.

<sup>41</sup> Satish Kapur, "Remembering Baba Sri Chand" *The Tribune*, 26 July 2007, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Kirpal Singh, "Baba Sri Chandji", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 11.

of love and peace. In 1546 A.D., he visited Mecca and preached the message of humanity among the Muslims of the West Asia.<sup>43</sup>

On return from his fourth and final *Udāsī*, Guru Nanak Dev wore the dress of a family man and removed his *Udāsī* attire.<sup>44</sup> Sri Chand begged to be blessed and asked for his worn *Udāsī* dress. Nanak blessed him with *Udāsī* dress as he thought him to be worthy of it.<sup>45</sup> Sri Chand took a vow to maintain its sanctity till his end.<sup>46</sup> The records of the *Bhatts* (bards) claim that he died at Kiratpur (Jan 13, 1629), while the *Udāsīs* believe that he vanished into the forests of Chamba after giving his last sermon to Brahmaketu, his ardent disciple from Bhutan.<sup>47</sup> Lakhmi Chand, the second son of Guru Nanak, led a family life and a son Dharam Chand was born to him.<sup>48</sup>

Great personalities of those times like Emperor Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Kamran and King Yaqub of Kashmir sought the blessings of Sri Chand. The noted scholar K.M. Munshi writes that Maharana Pratap sought Sri Chand's blessings to fight against Akbar. Jahangir also sent his men along with elephants to bring Sri Chand to his palace at Kadrabad now Nanakchak in Gurdaspur district. On refusal, the Mughal emperor himself paid a visit to Baba Sri Chand.<sup>49</sup>

Secondary works in abundance are available to construct the history of the *Udāsīs*. The little information which one can gather from these sources is

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<sup>43</sup> Jai Raj *Udasin*, "Yogiraj Udasin Acharya Bhagwan Sri Chand - A legend of his times", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> Bhai Gurdas, *Var*, 1as quoted by Ishar Singh Nara, p. XVI

“ਬਾਬਾ ਆਇਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਭੇਖ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਗਲ ਉਤਾਰਾ”

“ਪਹਿਰ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਕੱਪੜੇ ਮੰਜੀ ਬੈਠ ਕੀਆ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ”

<sup>45</sup> Giani Lal Singh, "Udasi Ki Reet Chalai", *Udasi Sampardaye Ate Sikh Panth*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 15-16; Also see, Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Part-I, No. 1, (for record of Guru Nanak's four *Udasīs*) Khalsa Tract Society, Amritsar.

<sup>46</sup> Kirpal Singh, "Baba Sri Chand Ji", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 12.

<sup>47</sup> [www.SriChandWikipedia.com](http://www.SriChandWikipedia.com), *Free The Encyclopedia*, Time 7.07 pm. Date June 17, 2009; Satish Kapoor, [www. Internet](http://www.Internet.com), Time 12 am, date 3/05/2010.

<sup>48</sup> Kirpal Singh, 'Baba Sri Chand Ji', *Udasi Sampradaye Ate Sikh Panth*, (ed. Gurdev Singh), p. 49.

<sup>49</sup> Jai Raj *Udasin*, "Yogiraj Udasin Acharya Bhagwan Sri Chand- A legend of his times", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 26.

that Sri Chand wore long hair, wandered as a naked hermit (*naga sadhu*), and established his separate sect called the *Udāsīs*. He had strained relations with the second and third Guru of the Sikhs. The only information that we gather from the third Guru is his submission to his followers not to have any relations with the *Udāsīs*.<sup>50</sup>

After forty years of Guru Nanak Dev's death, Sri Chand laid aside his old enmity towards the successors of Guru Nanak and tried to pacify Guru Ram Das, the fourth successor of Nanak, and cordial relations developed between the two. Guru Ram Das, keeping in view his age and relation with Guru Nanak, went to receive him and offered sweets and greeted him with five hundred rupees. The ice was broken and congenial relations developed between the *Udāsīs* and the Sikhs. This was the turning point in the life and philosophy of Baba Sri Chand. The fifth Guru, Arjan Dev went to see Baba Sri Chand at Barath in Gurdaspur<sup>51</sup> in 1590 A.D. Two places associated with the memory of Guru Arjan Dev's visit to Barath exist even today, a pillar, where he took rest and the Gurdwara *Manji Sahib*, about a mile away where he stayed for the night. Guru Arjan discussed with Sri Chand, the behaviour of Prithia, about the compilation of *Guru Granth Sahib* and about the scarcity of water in the Taran Taran *sarovar*. Sri Chand blessed him success and gave him some hand written scriptures and advised him to collect some others from his maternal uncle Baba Mohan. For the holy tank, he gave a vassal full of water from his *baoli*, to be poured into Taran Taran tank.<sup>52</sup> This incidence proves two things, one, that gradually amicable relations developed between Sri Chand and the Sikh Gurus. Secondly, Sri Chand had reconciled to the system of nomination of Guru, as started by Guru Nanak Dev. Guru Arjan Dev was the third son of Guru Ram Das, as such the right of inheritance should have gone to Prithia. The conduct of Prithia was not appreciated by Guru Ram Das

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<sup>50</sup> John Malcom, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, vol. I, p. 198.

<sup>52</sup> Kirpal Singh, "Baba Sri Chand", *Udasi Sampradaye Ate Sikh Panth*, (ed. Gurdev Singh), p. 52.

and he preferred to nominate his youngest son Arjan Dev to *gurgaddi*, barring first two. Baba Sri Chand approved of this nomination.

The same kind of geniality continued between Sri Chand and Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. Guru Hargobind went to see Baba Sri Chand at his solitary place. Baba Sri Chand complimented him on his bravery in war against the Muslims. This brought a complete change in Baba Sri Chand's thinking and he went to see Guru Hargobind at Kiratpur. He expressed his desire to adopt Guru Hargobind's son, Baba Gurditta. According to the Sikh chronicle, *Suraj Parkash* by Santokh Singh, the sixth Guru Hargobind came to Barath Sahib for a *darshan* of Baba Sri Chand. He offered his eldest son, Gurditta, as a disciple to Baba Sri Chand. Gurditta was married and was eleven years old at that time.<sup>53</sup> To mark the adoption, Baba Sri Chand gave a cap to young Gurditta. He also handed over the *Matre* (incantations) and a necklace and confirmed the unity of Sikhism. This settled the long lasted division and separation between the two. Guru Hargobind sent the *Udāsīs* into the Hills to spread Sikhism. It brings us to the conclusion that Baba Sri Chand accepted the spiritual and temporal ethnicity of Sikhism. The adoption of Gurditta, goes to prove his acceptance of the concept of householdship, as preached and practiced by Guru Nanak.<sup>54</sup> Sri Chand built a memorial of his father by salvaging the urn containing his ashes and burying it at a place which developed into a town known as Dera Baba Nanak. The successors of Guru Nanak Dev held him in deep reverence.<sup>55</sup>

Among the works attributed to Sri Chand are *Arta* (in Sanskrit *artī*) Sri Guru Nanak Dev comprising ten *padas/couplet* in honour of his father; *Guru Gayatri* meant for recitation; *Sahansrnama* (lit. thousand named) in praise of the supreme being and *matravani*, comprising thirty nine *dvipadas* and is a

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<sup>53</sup> Jai Raj Udasin, "Yogiraj Udasin Acharya Bhagwan Sri Chand- A legend of his times", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 53.

<sup>54</sup> R.L. Nigham, "Baba Sri Chand", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1994, p. 6.

<sup>55</sup> Madanjit Kaur, "Udasi Matras", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1994, p. 43.

terse presentation of the *Udāsī* philosophy. He is also said to have written commentaries on the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta sutras* of Veda. A small shrine having the statue of Baba Sri Chand, lies at Pakhoke Randhave, near an old *tahli* tree (*Sheesham*), mythologically linked to the *Udāsī* preceptor.<sup>56</sup>

The term *Matra*, literary means a measure or quantity, or the length of time required to pronounce a short vowel. But the term has acquired an extended meaning in the *Udāsī* tradition, signifying an incantation or sacred text. An *Udāsī Matra* is the sacred formula addressed to the disciples, as counsel and advice.<sup>57</sup> There are considerable number of *Udāsī Matras* attributed to Guru Nanak, Sri Chand and Baba Gurditta, as well as to Almast, Balu Hasna and Bhagat Bhagwan, the heads of some *Udāsī* Orders discussed in the following pages. But the *Matras* attributed to Sri Chand have special significance for the *Udāsīs* and are highly cherished by them. The *Matras* vary in number as several of their versions are available in *Gurmukhi*, *Hindi* and *Devanagari*. In these compositions, Baba Sri Chand has laid emphasis on the inner qualities of life, rather than on the outward appearance and symbols.<sup>58</sup> The *Matras* of Baba Sri Chand, the *Udāsīs* believed, were in no way of less spiritual power than the *Japuji* of Guru Nanak, a clear indication of their heterodoxy against the orthodox beliefs of Sikhism, where the *Japuji* of Guru Nanak holds primary position in the Sikh scriptures and the codification of the *Adi Granth* is unquestionable.<sup>59</sup>

Baba Sri Chand, thus, lived for more than a century and spent most of his life in the Punjab which was part of the Empire of the Lodhi Afghans and later on of the Mughal rulers. It was a time when society was facing religious and moral degradation and expectantly, Sri Chand's socio-religious ideology

<sup>56</sup> Satish Kapoor, "Remembering Baba Sri Chand", *The Tribune*, 26 July, 2007.

<sup>57</sup> Madanjit Kaur, "Udasi Matras", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, pp. 29-44.; <http://www.invinciblemusic.com/baba-siri-chand-chants-from-brahm-buta>.

<sup>58</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, M.S.*, No. 75, Rare Book Section, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, ff 515ab.

<sup>59</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 86-90.

must have been influenced by the given socio-religious milieu.<sup>60</sup> He founded seats of culture and centers were established for propagation of his ideas at a number of places.<sup>61</sup>

### III

Early *Udāsīs* established four *Dhuans* (smouldering hearths), which became active centers of their missionary work.<sup>62</sup> Each *Dhuan* came to be known after the name of its principal preacher: Almast, Balu Hasna, Goinda or Goind Sahib and Phul Sahib. Gradually, they became zealous preachers of Sikhism and carried its message to the far off corners of the country and perhaps beyond. They rediscovered places which had been visited by the Gurus and which had fallen into obscurity with the passage of time.<sup>63</sup> The *Dhuan* of Bhai Almast, flourished in the eastern parts with head quarters at Nanakmata and branches among several other places at Dhaka, Patna, Jagannath Puri and Nainital; the *Dhuan* of Bhai Balu Hasna gained influence in western parts of the Punjab and the Kashmir. The headquarters of this *Dhuan* were found established in the Punjab at Charankaul, near Anandpur; the *Dhuan* of Bhai Goind or Gonda came up in southern parts of the Punjab popularly called the Malwa region with its most famous centres at Shikarpur and at Sangalwala in Amritsar; and finally the *Dhuan* of Bhai Phul sahib in the Doaba i.e. the tract between the rivers Beas and Sutlej.<sup>64</sup> Unfortunately, adequate contemporary information is not available on the functioning of these *Udāsī* centers and the

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<sup>60</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup> Mohinder Pal Kohli, "Baba Sri Chand: Man and His Mission", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 49.

<sup>62</sup> I.B. Benerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, vol. II, 18,19,27,28; Also see, J.S. Grewal, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, pp. 59-60; *The Gazetteer of India*, Indian Union, vol. I, Country and the People, p. 487.; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "Madh-kali Punjab diyan dharmik sikh sampardavan di Itihaskari", Presidential address, Punjabi Section, *Punjab History Conference Proceedings* Patiala, 1997.

<sup>63</sup> Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol. V, S-Z, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1998, p. 37.

<sup>64</sup> *Census of India 1891*, Vol. XIX, Punjab and its Feudatories, Part I, E.D. MacLagen, Calcutta 1892, p 151; *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, (ed.), James Hastings, Vol. XII, T & T Clark, New York, 1958 (First Impression 1921), p. 504.

lines of successions of the early *Udāsīs* of the *Dhuans*. Some information, however, may be found on them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century *Udāsī* literature, besides a few references in the medieval Punjabi literature and other sources of the same period.

The first Order of the *Udāsīs* belonging to four *Dhuans* arose with Almast a term which denotes the enthusiast. In view of a later *Udāsī* writer, Brahmanand, Almast was born in 1553 A.D. at Srinagar in the house of Kashmiri Gaur Brahman.<sup>65</sup> He was a close associate of Sri Chand, known popularly by his first name Kamalyia. He is believed to have settled at Nanakmatta in Uttar Pradesh with the blessing of Guru Hargobind.<sup>66</sup> It is said that Almast prepared a long list of the preachers. He made them learn *Gurmukhi*. At that time learning *Gurmukhi* was compulsory for every new entrant in the *Udāsī* sect.<sup>67</sup> Out of those who adopted the *Udāsī* sect under his influence the most prominent eight were: Bhai Makhu Chand, Bhai Natha, Bhai Akalwand, Bhai Hamira Das, Bhai Garib Das Vadde, Bhai Garib Das Chhote, Bhai Lachhman Das and Bhai Mangoo Das. Seven of them were sent to different directions to propagate *Udāsī* tenets and Bhai Makhu was appointed by Almast as *Mahant* of the famous establishment at Nanakmatta. Those who succeeded him in turn at this center include Makhu Chand, Bhai Mitha, Bhai Gurdas Dakhani, Bhai Nand, Bhai Kirpal Das and Bhai Narain Das. Bhai Gurdas Dakhani, in 1698 A.D., wrote *Rehat Nama* or code of conduct for *Udāsī Sadhus* and named it as *Matra Udas Sampardaya*.<sup>68</sup> Bhai Natha associated with this premiere or parent centre is said to have established its branch at Dacca in West Bengal in 1643.<sup>69</sup> Brahmanand Udasin claims

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<sup>65</sup> Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, 517-18.

<sup>66</sup> Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahima Parkash*, Bhasha Vibhag Punjab, Patiala, 1970, pp. 490, 492.

<sup>67</sup> Shamsher Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, (ed.), Sarbjinder Singh, Punjab Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala, Dec.2005, p. 92.

<sup>68</sup> Randhir Singh Bhai, *Udasi Sikhan di Vithiya*, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, 1959. pp. 108-110.

<sup>69</sup> *Mahima Parkash*, pp. 494, 718; Also see, G. B Singh, "Sikh Relics in Eastern Bengal", *Punjab Past and Present*, Vol. IX, Pt. I, Patiala, 1967, pp. 72-93.

some of the *Udāsī* centers in the Punjab as affiliated to the *Dhuan* of Almast.<sup>70</sup> Almast died at Nanakmatta in 1643 A.D.<sup>71</sup> In Bihar at Patna, there existed twenty two centres of the Almast *Dhuan*.<sup>72</sup>

Almast visited Gaya, Bihar and Orissa and had established *Dharmasalas* over there. The caretakers of these *Dharmasalas* were the *Udāsī Sadhus* of Chando Shah, who was the follower of Bawa Gurdas Dakhni. At Patna, when Baba Ganga Das (the eighth generation from Ajit Mal, the seventh follower of Almast) visited the house of Prabhu Das in 1885 A.D.<sup>73</sup>, Prabhu Das donated his residential place for the establishment of *Dharmasala* and later on the *Sadhus* of the family of Prabhu Das kept managing this *Dharmasala*. In Uttar Pradesh at Paryag, *Sadhu* Kirpal of Almast *Dhuan* established a *Dharmasala* and in his absence Mehar Das took care of it. At Kashi, Dharm Das (who belonged to the twelfth generation of Mangoo Sahib, the follower of Almast) in 1901 A.D, established a *Dharmasala* at Pudhani. Makhu Chand (second Mahant of Nanakmatta) sent Lachhman Das to Lucknow, to establish a *Dharmasala* over there. *Dharmasalas* were also established at Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Malerkotla and Nalagarh. Bawa Gurdas Dakhni sent his follower Khyali Das in 1698 A.D, who established a *Dharmasala* at Longowal. During the period of Sikh rule a *Jagir* was also allotted in the name of this *Dharmasala*. *Dharmasala* of Dirbha Pind also belonged to *Dhuan* of Almast.<sup>74</sup> Under this *Dhuan*, the centers of *Udāsīs* were established in Bangla Desh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Pakistan, Multan and Sindh. Among its followers one hundred and nineteen *Mahants* remained *Bairagi* (celibate) and thirty were *Grihasti Mahants* (house holders).<sup>75</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Brahamanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, pp. 151-152, 154-155, 160, 218-220 and 227-231.

<sup>71</sup> Guljar Singh Kang, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Te Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripeksh*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1995, p. 90.

<sup>72</sup> "Shamsher Singh, Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p. 93.

<sup>73</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>74</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, pp. 118-22.

<sup>75</sup> Sita Ram Chaturvedi, *Bahrat Ke Udasin Sant*, Akhil Bhartiya Vikram Parishad, Kashi, 1967, pp. 9-56; Also see, Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, pp. 119-125.



Balu Hasna was the younger brother of Almast. He was born in *samvat* 1621 i.e. 1564 A.D. His early name was Bal krishan. Sarup Das Bhalla writes that Balu Hasna received the title of Hasna from Guru Hargobind as a reward for his services rendered to him and his son Baba Gurditta.<sup>76</sup> Baba Gurditta adopted Balu Hasna as his disciple in 1636 A.D.<sup>77</sup> The latter appointed him as a head of the *dera* at Kartarpur.<sup>78</sup> Among his disciples, Bawa Jado Rai and Bawa Puran Das, are well known.<sup>79</sup> The headquarters of the Balu Hasna was established at Charankaul in the Punjab.<sup>80</sup> Balu Hasna *Dhuan* had forty five branches in Bihar.<sup>81</sup> Balu Hasna died at Dehradun in 1660 A.D.<sup>82</sup> An eminent *Udāsī* poet, Sant Rein, belonged to the *Dhuan* of Balu Hasna. It had ninety nine *Grihasti* and three hundred and four celibate or *Bairagi Mahants*.<sup>83</sup>

Phul Sahib was the younger brother of Goind Sahib. He was born on 1573 A.D. In 1637 A.D., he was appointed head of this *Dhuan*. The headquarters of the *Dhuan* of Phul Sahib were found located at Dera Charan Shah, Bahadurpur in Hoshiarpur district.<sup>84</sup> The *dera* was established in 1643 and with the passage of time, it became one of the most important centre of the later *Udāsīs*.<sup>85</sup> *Mahant* Charan Shah Nirban was the first disciple successor of Phul Sahib at this *dera*. He was succeeded by Nanak Shah, Bawa Dhakni Shah and Sri Gurbaksh Shah in turn.<sup>86</sup> To the *gaddi* of this *dera*, *Mahant* Gobind

<sup>76</sup> Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahima Parkash*, pp. 498-500.

<sup>77</sup> Shamsher Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p. 93.

<sup>78</sup> Brahamanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, 518-519.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 23, 27-28 : Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 18.

<sup>80</sup> *Settlement Report Hoshiarpur District 1879*, pp. 34-35; *District Gazetteer, Hoshiarpur 1904*, p. 72; *Census of India 1891*, Pt I, Vol. XIX, p. 151.

<sup>81</sup> Shamsher Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p-93.

<sup>82</sup> Guljar Singh Kang, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Te Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekh*, p. 90.

<sup>83</sup> Jasbir Singh Sabar, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Ate Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekh* Gurnam Kaur, (ed.), Publication Bureau, Punjabi Univeristy, Patiala, 1995, p. 54.

<sup>84</sup> *Settlement Report of Hoshiarpur District, 1879-84*, Calcutta, 1885, p. 35.

<sup>85</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings, 11 March, 1859*, Nos. 63-69.

<sup>86</sup> Brahamanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 90.

Das succeeded his Guru Gurmukh Das after his death in 1848.<sup>87</sup> Later on, this *dera* enjoyed revenue-free land grants worth Rs. 1108 per annum from the Sikh rulers. It had 70 celibate (*Bairagi*) *Mahants* and 16 *Grihasti*.<sup>88</sup> Phul Shah died on 1730 *Samvat* i.e. 1673 A.D, at Bahadurpur in Hoshiarpur.<sup>89</sup> Five centres of Phul Sahib *Dhuan*, existed in Bihar.<sup>90</sup>

Goind Sahib was born in Khatri family of Srinagar, to parents Lala Jai Dev Das and Subhadra Devi. At the age of thirty he was appointed by Baba Sri Chand in 1636 A.D., as head of Kiratpur Sahib *Dhuan*. He is known to have a considerable number of his disciples of whom Bawa Kamal Nain was well known for his missionary activity. Pandit Brahmanand Udasin writes that, the *bakhshish* of Mihan Sahib was linked to this *Dhuan* through Bawa Kanwal Nain and Bawa Nand Lal Sohna.<sup>91</sup> The centers of this Order were found established at Sikarpur in Sindh.<sup>92</sup> Another famous *Udāsī Akhara* of this Order was established in the city of Amritsar.<sup>93</sup> The *Udāsīs* of this Order claim several of their centres established in the states of Patiala, Nabha and Malerkotla, besides a few in the district of Ludhiana.<sup>94</sup> On the whole, all the *Udāsī* centers affiliated to various *Dhuans* are claimed by the *Bara Akhara* established by *Mahant* Pritam Das in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as the progenitor of this central *Udāsī* organization. Goind Sahib died in 1649 A.D., at Phillaur.<sup>95</sup> The Panchyati Akhara established thirty six *Dharamsals* at Patna out of which

<sup>87</sup> *Foreign/ Secret Consultations 20 December, 1845*, No. 144; p. 19.

<sup>88</sup> Jasbir Singh Sabar, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Ate Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, p. 54.

<sup>89</sup> Guljar Singh Kang, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Te Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, p. 90.

<sup>90</sup> Shamsheer Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p. 93.

<sup>91</sup> Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, Amar Printing Press, Shukhar, 1923, pp. 28-29.

<sup>92</sup> *Settlement Report of Hoshiarpur, 1879-84*, 35 ; *Census of India, 1891*, ff. 1, Vol. XIX, 151.

<sup>93</sup> *Census of India, 1891*, 151; D. Ibbetson and E. D. MacLagan, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Punjab*, Vol. III, Lahore, 1919, p. 479.

<sup>94</sup> Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, 21-216, 223; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 19.

<sup>95</sup> Guljar Singh Kang, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Te Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, p. 90

a few exist even today i.e.,; Karnal Ganj established in 1663 by Achint Parkash; established by Gulmehar at Simly in 1715 ; Salia Mahadev established in 1847 by Parmanand.<sup>96</sup>

#### IV

Besides the four *Dhuans*, there emerged another set of *Udāsī* seats called six *Bakshishes* and ten sub-*Bakshishes*,<sup>97</sup> which flourished during the time of Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>98</sup> A *Bakshish* (lit bounty) was a missionary assignment conferred upon an individual by the Guru. There were six prominent *bakshishes* viz *Bhagat Bhagvanie*, *Suthreshahie*, *Sangat Sahibie*, *Mihan Shahie* (so called after Mihan); *Bakht Mallie* and *Jit-Malie*. The saints of Bakshishes travelled widely and established their *Deras*, *Sangats*, and *Akharas* in distant places throughout India. The *Udāsīs* preached the message of Guru Nanak and revered and recited the *bani* of the Gurus, yet they retained their separate identity. Baba Sri Chand did occasionally visit the Gurus who treated him with respect for being a saintly personage as well as for being a son of Guru Nanak. However, after Sri Chand admitted Gurditta to his sect, the *Udāsīs* began to receive support and guidance from the Gurus. Guru Hargobind's successors conferred *bakshishes* upon *Udāsī Sadhus*.<sup>99</sup> Bhagwan Gir, founder of the *Bhagat*

<sup>96</sup> Shamsher Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, (ed.), Sarbjinder Singh, Punjab Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala, Dec. 2005, p. 93.

<sup>97</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, p 77; Also see, *Census of India* 1901, Vol. XVII, Part I, Report, p. 134.; <http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Udasi>; Besides, the *Dhuans* and *Bakshishes*, there emerged ten Sub-*Bakhsishes*; which consisted of Manak Chander and Mehar Chand (Vikrami *samvat* 1620-1685), Sodi Dhir Mal (Vikrami *samvat* 1683-1773), Niranjan Rai (Vikrami *samvat* 1612 initiation), Diwana Sahib (Vikrami *samvat* 1635-1705), Kanhaiya Sahib (Vikrami *samvat* 1725-1689), Seva Das (Vikrami *samvat* 1726-1786), Ram Dasiye (Baba Budhha ji) (Vikrami *samvat* 1584-1688), Jigyasuram Ram Nirban (Vikrami *samvat* 1720 initiation), Ram Rai and Thaan Das (Vikrami *samvat* 1793-1744): See, Jasbir Singh Sabar, "Udasi Sampardaye: Udbhav Ate Vikas", p. 55.

<sup>98</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, pp. 177-180, 484.

<sup>99</sup> Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. V, S-Z, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1998, p. 377

*Bhagwanias*, was born in 1499 A.D.<sup>100</sup> He was a *Sanyasi Sadhu* of Panchal Desh (of Purab and Bihar). He came in contact with Guru Har Rai. He was closely associated with Mehar Chand, son of Dharam Chand. This association made him adopt *Udāsī Bhekh* and Baba Dharm Chand named him Bhagat Bhagwan.<sup>101</sup> Hence, the *Bhagat Bhagwanias* trace their foundation to Guru Har Rai.<sup>102</sup> The followers of Bhagat Bhagwan are known as *Nanak Shahi* Saints also. Puro ji, Narain Das, Badri Das, Ram Sahai were his Guru Bhai and others like Tika Ram, Bakhat Mal, Shyam Sagar, Sangat Das, Lal Das, Darbai, Durga Das, Jagat Ram were his followers.<sup>103</sup> It is said three hundred and sixty followers of Bhagat Bhagwan became *Udāsīs*.<sup>104</sup> Bhai kahan Singh Nabha has made a reference to three hundred and seventy centres of this *Bakhshish* in the North.<sup>105</sup> Fateh Singh, a follower of Bhakat Mal of Bhakat Bhagwan's *Bakhshish*, established a *dharamshala* at Patna in 1705 A.D. In Bihar, the famous Centres of *Bhagat Bhagwan Bakhshish* are at Chatra in District Hazaribagh, established in 1638 A.D by Baba Sobha Ram, disciple of Badri Das and at Daud Nagar, in District Gaya, established in 1637 A.D by Baba Dharam Murat, disciple of Badri Das.<sup>106</sup>

The followers of Mihan Sahib claim their association with Guru Tegh Bahadur. It may be significant to mention that Mihan Sahib was not connected with either Baba Gurditta or Sri Chand. Both Major R. Leech and Giani Gian Singh trace his origin from Guru Tegh Bahadur whom he is said to have served in the *langar*.<sup>107</sup> The *dera* Bawa Magni Ram was very famous centre of

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<sup>100</sup> Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, p. 95.

<sup>101</sup> Randhir Singh, Bhai, *Udasi Sikhan di Vithia*, pp. 185-90.

<sup>102</sup> *Panth Parkash*, 1280-81; Also see, *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, 20 December 1845, No. 144; *Census of India, 1891*, Vol. XIX, Part I, (ed., MacLagan), Calcutta, 1892, p. 151.

<sup>103</sup> Randhir Singh, Bhai, *Udasi Sikhan di Vithia*, pp. 185-190.

<sup>104</sup> Shamsher Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p. 95.

<sup>105</sup> Kahan Singh Nabha, *Mahan Kosh*, p. 901.

<sup>106</sup> Shamsher Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p. 96.

<sup>107</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, 1282; *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, 20 December 1845, No. 144; Also see, *Census of India 1901* Part I, Shimla, 1902, p. 134.

this *bakhshish*.<sup>108</sup> Brahma Nand, a follower of *Mahant* Nitya Nand of Akhara Sangalwala, Amritsar, established a *dharmshala* in Patna in 1858 A.D. This *bakhshish* had twenty eight centres in Bihar. A few important are at Dhania Pahari established in 1893 A.D., Madhusudan, Ghaswari Gira, Fatuha Nibada and Pachamba Giridhi etc.<sup>109</sup>

Santokh Singh and Giani Gian Singh both mention Jit Mal and Bhagat Mal as the missionary agents of Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>110</sup> It may be added that the *Udāsī* followers of the *bakhshish* of Sangat Sahib claim their links with the *Chhota* or *Nayyan Akhara* founded by Santokh Das in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>111</sup> Such links of the *Udāsīs* with the rest of the *Bakshishes*, however, are not known.

One of the five sons of Bibi Veero, Jit Mal, was the head of *Bakshish* called Jit Malie. The main centre of this *Bakshish* was located at Fatehpur. Significantly they were working as the *Masands* to propagate Sikhism.<sup>112</sup>

Suthre Shah<sup>113</sup> had the blessings of Guru Har Rai. He was born at Bahrapur village, near Baramullah in Kashmir, to Nande Shah Khatri. It is said that he was born with teeth in his mouth. His parents left him thinking it to be a bad omen for their family. Guru Har Gobind took him in his shelter and named him as *Suthra*. Later on, he is said to have served Guru Har Rai also.

The followers of *Sangat Sahib* (also known as *Sachi Dahri* or Bhai Pheru) were known as *Sangat Sahibias*. This *Bakshish* was being managed by Bhai Pheru. He was born in 1640 A.D, at Ambmari in *Mian ke Mor Pargana*

<sup>108</sup> *Punjab States Gazetteers*, Phulkian States, Patiala, Jind and Nabha, 1904 Vol. XVII, p. 78: Also see, Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*, p. 20; *Punjab Census 1901* (report) p. 134.

<sup>109</sup> Shamsheer Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, pp. 94, 95.

<sup>110</sup> Santokh Singh, *Sri Gur Partap Suraj Granth* (ed.), Bhai Vir Singh, Khalsa Samachar, Amritsar 1965, Part XI, 489, ras 12, ansu 29, and Panth Parkash 1281.

<sup>111</sup> *Panth Parkash*, 1276-1277: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*; p. 21.

<sup>112</sup> Gurmukh Singh, "Udasi Sampradaye: Udbhav Te Vikas", *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, p. 66.

<sup>113</sup> A. Barth, *The Religion of India*, S.Chand and Co., New Dehli, 1969, pp. 249-250. Also see, Punjab Census 1901, Vol. XVII, Part-I, Report p. 134. Bhai Kahan Singh *Mahan Kosh*, p. 212.

in Punjab. He became the follower of Guru Har Rai who named him Pheru.<sup>114</sup> He was given the title of *Sachhi Dahri* and was blessed by Guru Har Rai and Guru Gobind Singh. The followers of Bhai Pheru were Charan Das, Chukha, Khan Shah, Brindaban, Jagta nad Bhagta. They all served Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>115</sup> Bhai Vasudev of the Sangat Sahibia *Bakshish* established a *dharmshala* at Patna in Loongola Mohalla, during the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1835 A.D. It had nine other centres at Patna in Bihar: Dharmshala Bhai Prem Das, Mohalla Begam Pur; Dharmshala Mahant Ram Kishan Dass, Sati Chowra; Dera Mahant Gopal Dass, Maru Ganj; Dera Mahant Aaya Ram, Siri Ghat; Dharmshala Bhai Prem Dass, Siri Ghat; Dharmshala Mahant Brahm Dayal, Nausak Ghat; Dharmshala Mahant Bhrigu Das, Mahavir Ghat; Asthan Bhai Ram Parkash, Khusro Pur, Nivada; Dharmshala Mahant Jamna Das at Chhatua Ghat.<sup>116</sup>

In Major Leech's view, Bhai Pheru had received the title of Sangat Sahib from Guru Har Gobind in return for his unconditional service to the *Guru Ka Langar* at Nakka region of the Punjab. In Giani Gian Singh's view, he was formerly a *masand* of the Sikh Gurus and became the founder with the blessings of Guru Har Rai.<sup>117</sup> *Panda Vahi* records mention Sangat Sahib as a disciple of Guru Har Rai and his visit to Haridwar in 1707 A.D. along with his forty two *chelas* of whom Narain Das, Charan Das and Brindaban were relatively more influential.<sup>118</sup> The headquarters and majority of the centres of this *bakshish* were found established in the districts of Lahore and Amritsar.<sup>119</sup>

*Bakht Malia bakshish* was blessed by Guru Gobind Singh and was being managed by Bakht Mal. According to Bhai Kahan Singh, he was the *Masand* of Kabul, whom Guru Gobind Singh had forgiven.

<sup>114</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, p. 252.

<sup>115</sup> Kahan Singh nabha, *Mahan Kosh*, p. 822.

<sup>116</sup> Shamsheer Singh, "Udasi Sampardai ate Gurmat Parchar", *Nanak Parkash Pattrika*, Vol-II, p. 94.

<sup>117</sup> *Panth Parkash*, 1280-81, Also see, *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, 20 December 1845, No. 144 .

<sup>118</sup> Pandit Shiv Parshad, *Vahi Udasin* (Sangat Sahibias) Haridwar.

<sup>119</sup> *Census of India 1891*, Part 1, Vol. XIX, 151-152.

## V

Thus, we find that several of the *Udāsī Mahants* are remembered with esteem in the Sikh tradition. For instance, there are the famous Bhagat Bhagwan, Bhai Pheru of the Sangat Sahib Order, who had served the *langar* in the time of Guru Har Rai, and Ramdev (later on known as Mihan Sahib), who was originally a *Mashki* or water carrier in the service of Guru Teg Bahadur<sup>120</sup> and who had received from him for his devoted service the title of Mihan (bestower of rain) as well as the dress and marks of an *Udāsī* consisting of *seli* (woolen Cord), *Topi* (Cap), *Chola* (hermit's gown) and a *Nagara* (drum). Ram Dev established his own Order of the *Udāsīs* which came to be known as Mihan Dasie or Mihan Shahie.<sup>121</sup>

Another notable *Udāsī sadhu* was Mahant Kirpal who took part in the battle of Bhangani (1689) under Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>122</sup> After the abolition of *Masands* by Guru Gobind Singh, the preaching of Guru Nanak's words fell to the *Udāsīs* who also gradually took control of Sikh places of worship. When Guru Gobind Singh evacuated the fort of Anandpur along with his Sikhs, an *Udāsī* monk, Gurbaksh Das, undertook to look after the local shrines such as Sis Ganj and Kesgarh Sahib. After the death of Guru Gobind Singh, one Gulab Rai, proclaimed himself Guru at Anandpur and tried to take possession of the Shrines but Gurbaksh Das thwarted his scheme. Gurbaksh Das's successors continued to look after the Anandpur shrines till their management was taken over in recent times by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.<sup>123</sup> At Nanded, where Guru Gobind Singh passed away, Mahant Ishar Das *Udāsī* performed the services at *Darbar* Guru Gobind Singh (Hazur Sahib) and managed shrine from 1708 to 1725 AD.<sup>124</sup> He was succeeded by his disciple

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<sup>120</sup> *Census of India 1891*, Part 1, Vol. XIX, 151-152.

<sup>121</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, p. 378.

<sup>123</sup> Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. V, p. 378.

<sup>124</sup> *Loc. cit.*

Gopal Das *Udāsī*, who remained in-charge of Darbar Hazur Sahib upto 1746 AD. Gopal Das was succeeded by his disciple Saran Das *Udāsī*, who served the Shrine for a long period of thirty years. After Saran Das, the control of the *Darbar* passed into the hands of the Sikhs who had, by that time, come from Punjab in considerable numbers and settled at Nanded.<sup>125</sup>

In 1711 AD, an *Udāsī Sadhu*, *Mahant* Gopal Das, popularly known as Goddar *Faqir*, was appointed *Granthi* at Harmandir at Amritsar by Bhai Mani Singh, and was sent to Amritsar as a custodian of the shrine of Mata Sundari. Gopal Das was later on replaced by another *Udāsī*, Bhai Chanchal Singh, a pious and devoted Sikh.<sup>126</sup>

In I.B. Banerjee's view the system of *Sangats* and *Masands* was supplemented by Guru Hargobind and his successors by way of adding more missionary centers in the form of *Dhuans* (hearths) and *bakhshishes* (bounties) under the command of some prominent *Udāsī* personalities of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as leaders of these centres.<sup>127</sup> A mutual understanding is believed to have reached between the *Udāsīs* and Guru Hargobind. In an *Udāsī* work of early 19<sup>th</sup> century, *Udāsī Bodh*, Sant Rein represents Baba Gurditta as the re-incarnation of Guru Nanak to claim back the *Udāsī bhekh* from Sri Chand and then Guru Nanak (in the form of Gurditta) bestowed this *bhekh* upon Almast, Balu Hasna, Goinda and Phul Sahib.<sup>128</sup> Thus, an attempt was made by the *Udāsīs* to throw the clock of legitimacy over a development that took place during the pontificate of the sixth Sikh Guru.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. V, p. 378.

<sup>126</sup> R.L. Nigham, 'Baba Srichand,' *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand ji*, p. 7.

<sup>127</sup> I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol.-II, 18,19,27 and 48.: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 16.

<sup>128</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff 306-19; J.S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, Cambridge University Press, New Dehli, 2005, pp. 117, 24; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 17.

<sup>129</sup> J. S. Grewal, "The Dissidents", *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, pp. 60-61; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 17.



## VI

To recapitulate, it may be stated that the *Udāsīs* who trace their spiritual descent from Baba Sri Chand, emerged on the scene of Sikh history in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. As an Order of ascetics, they practised renunciation(*Udāsī*) and asceticism, quite contrary to Guru Nanak's social philosophy. Sri Chand himself remained a celibate throughout his life span of over a century. As he did not adhere to the religious preaching of his father, Guru Nanak, the latter nominated Guru Angad as his first disciple successor in 1539 by surpassing Sri Chand's legal claim in accordance with the law of primogeniture. Though Sri Chand's relations with Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das remained strained, but later on, he seems to have developed cordial relations with Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Hargobind. Moreover, Baba Sri Chand is believed to have passed the *Udāsīs*'s line of succession to Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind. But, it is difficult to uphold this claim of the *Udāsīs* as no certain date of the death of Baba Sri Chand is available. It is further believed that Baba Gurditta established the four Orders of the *Udāsīs*, called the *dhuans* (hearths) which came to be known as the *adi-Udāsīs*. Thus, the earliest known *Udāsīs* are the *Udāsīs* of the *dhuans* of, Almast, Balu Hasna, Goinda or Goind Sahib and Phul Sahib. The *Udāsīs* of these Orders became zealous preachers of Sikhism and carried the message of Guru Nanak to far off places, which had been sanctified by the Sikh Gurus, especially Guru Nanak himself.

Besides the four *dhuans*, there emerged six *bakshishes* (bounties) and various sub-*bakshishes* during the pontificates of Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh for the expansion and consolidation of the *Udāsī* movement. The *Udāsīs* of the *dhuans* and the *bakshishes* travelled very widely and hence established the *Udāsī deras* or the *akhara* in distant places in and outside the Punjab. They primarily preached the message of Guru Nanak and revered and recited the *bani* of the Sikh Gurus. However, it may be noted, that the terms *dhuans* and *bakshishes* do not in any way imply the organizational unity among the *Udāsīs* of various Orders.

Moreover, adequate contemporary information is not available on the functioning and the lines of successions of the various *Udāsī* centres affiliated with the *dhuans* and the *bakshishes*. Some limited information, however, may be found in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century *Udāsī* literature, besides a few references in the medieval Punjabi literature and other contemporary sources of the same period.

## CHAPTER II

### *UDĀSĪ* ESTABLISHMENTS

The word establishment has been used for *Akharas*, *Deras*, *Darbars*, *Dharmshalas*, *Samadhs* and the *Gurdwaras* which were under the control and management of the *Udāsīs*.<sup>1</sup> Many of these establishments were known by the names of their *Mahants*. These institutions served as centers of religious, cultural and educational activities. They also provided food and shelter to the visitors as such they were popular with the native people.<sup>2</sup> Benevolent attitude of the Sikh rulers helped the *Udāsīs* grow in numbers and soon a large number of establishments grew up within and outside the Punjab by the middle of the nineteenth century. Sulakhan Singh, in his recent work on the *Udāsīs*, has given in detail their position in regard to their establishments, before the annexation of the Punjab by the British.<sup>3</sup> He has identified about two hundred and fifty *Udāsī* centres existing and flourishing during the period of Sikh rule. The position of the *Udāsī* centres in the colonial Punjab has been studied in this chapter especially in regard to their numbers, distribution and relative importance.

#### I

After the annexation of the Punjab, there was a sudden change in political, social, and religious affairs of the state. The new rulers, the British, introduced new administrative set up replacing the old rulers and bureaucracy. The introduction of new administrative pattern affected the society as a whole and the Sikhs in particular, who were considerably deprived of their acquired power

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<sup>1</sup> Many Establishments were known by the names of their Mahants, besides the name of important places, *deras*, *samadhs* and memorials: Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan di Vithya*, p. 573.

<sup>2</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "The Udāsīs in the Early Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. II, 1981, pp. 35-36.

<sup>3</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, ABS Publications, Jalandhar, 1999.

and prestige. The liberal state patronage which the *Udāsīs* had been enjoying earlier, dwindled away. In the beginning, not much change was noticed on the religious front, but its effects could be seen in the following years. The new administrators first of all studied the social and religious aspects of the people and did not interfere with it, as they feared backlash. They knew well that the religion was a sensitive issue for the masses and in the beginning they very largely let the system of revenue-free grants to continue as it was. on, they started utilizing the state machinery to turn the socio-religious organizations into their mould. Gradually, they started reducing and in some cases totally withdrew the land grants, allocated by the earlier rulers. The shift in their policy affected many religious organizations and the *Udāsīs* the most, as they were the major recipients of such grants during the Sikh rule. From the time of the British occupation of the Punjab, a steady decline in the numbers of the *Udāsī* establishments as well as change in their organizational set-up is easily discernible.

## II

As is the case of the *Udāsī* centres, there are two major works, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* (1923) by Brahmanand and *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithiya* (1959) by Randhir Singh, the latter wrote at the behest of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, which provide considerable information on the changing position of the *Udāsīs* in the colonial period, especially in regard to their establishments. Besides, there are the published and unpublished *British Records* and the *Panda Vahi Records* which provide us information regarding the state of affairs of the *Udāsī* establishments under the British.

Before the establishment of the Sikh rule in the Punjab, the number of the religious structures of the *Udāsīs*, known as the *Deras*, the *Akharas*, as well as the *Dharmshalas* and the *Gurdwaras*, increased from nearly a dozen to fifty by the close of eighteenth century and to two hundred and fifty by the mid 19<sup>th</sup>

century.<sup>4</sup> The *Udāsī* establishments were found largely concentrated in the districts of Amritsar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Lahore, Jullundur, Gurdaspur, Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, and Sialkot.<sup>5</sup> In some of the districts their number was not more than one.<sup>6</sup> Early British records available in the National Archives of India clearly show maximum concentration of the *Udāsī* establishments in the districts of Amritsar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Lahore, Jalandhar, and Gurdaspur.<sup>7</sup>

If we look at the district-wise position of the establishments, the archival records show that the total number of the *Udāsī* establishments, with different nomenclature, in Amritsar was thirty, whereas the *Panda Vahi* records give the number as twenty one in the same district.<sup>8</sup> Out of the total eighteen *Udāsī Akharas* found in the Punjab, about a dozen (thirteen) were found situated in Amritsar alone during the period of Sikh rule. The most prominent of these were the *Akharas* of Baba Santokh Das, Pritam Das, Balanand, Tahal Das, Ghumand Das, Bibeksar, Kashiwala, Ganga Ram, Odit Narayan, Chhattewala, Nirbansar, Mastram and Karamdas.<sup>9</sup>

The British Documents mention the existence of about one hundred and twenty *Dharmshalas* in the Punjab. In Amritsar, their number was less than a

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<sup>4</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 46; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "The Udāsīs in the Early Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Regional History*, Vol II, p. 34..

<sup>5</sup> Amritsar-51; Ferozepur-36; Ludhiana-31; Lahore-29; Jullundur-19; Gurdaspur-16; Gujranwala-11; Sheikhupura-9; Sialkot-8: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, Appendix I, pp. 122-135; Sulakhan Singh, 'The Udāsī Establishments under Sikh Rule', *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. I, History Department, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar 1980, pp. 73-74.

<sup>6</sup> Khangarh-8; Jhang-5; Gujrat-5; Shahpur-4; Hoshiarpur-7; Rawalpindi-3; Montgomery-2; Dera Ismail Khan-1; Jhehlum-1; Kangra-1; Multan-1; Kapurthala-1; Shahabad-1; Ambala-1: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, Appendix I, pp. 73,74, 122-135.

<sup>7</sup> Amritsar 30, Ferozepur 27, Ludhiana 24, Lahore 23, Jalandhar 13 and Gurdaspur 12; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 122-135.

<sup>8</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*; Appendix I, for the Early British Documents, pp.122-30 and for *Panda Vahi* Records, pp. 131-34.

<sup>9</sup> The other *Akharas* were situated in Kapurthala as Akhara Gurdial at Landalah, Akhara Mela Ram at Nangal Sadhan in Lahore, Akhara Baba Sand Das at Batala in Gurdaspur, Akhara Baba Sidki Das at Gujranwala City, Akhara *Udasi* Sadhs at Baba Santokh Das in Gujarat Town.

dozen.<sup>10</sup> Also, there were the *Gurdwaras*, the *Asthans* and the *Samadhs*, which were in the custody of the *Udāsī Mahants*. The most famous were Asthan Rorguru Guru Arjan (Balak Ram,), Gurudwara Makhwal (Murli Das), Samadh Ram Das (Baba Budha), Charan Das, Gurudwara Bargaswar (Balak Ram), Gurudwara Baserke (Ram Das Mohan Singh), and Dera Chola (Guru Arjan, Puran Das). The total number of such centers was only six.<sup>11</sup>

The official sources mention the existence of about twenty five *Dharmsalas* belonging to the *Udāsīs* in the district of Ferozepur alone by the first half of the nineteenth century<sup>12</sup>, whereas *Panda Vahi* records refer to nine *Dharmsalas* only.<sup>13</sup> They also indicate the existence of one famous *Udāsī Shivdoo* Temple at Dharmkot, besides another religious place at Kot Kapura, but its nature is not mentioned.<sup>14</sup>

There were only five *dharmsalas* in Gurdaspur district situated at Dharamkot Bagga, Batala City, Kherah, Jalalachuk, and Shri Hargobindpur.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The above information has been prepared on the basis of the Early British Documents; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*, Appendix I, pp. 122-130.

<sup>11</sup> Early British Documents.

<sup>12</sup> These were situated at Talwandi Mullian (Zeera- Baba Ghumanda Ram *Dharmsala*); Talwandi Mullian (Zeera- Baba Ghumanda Ram Tahal Das, *Dharmsala*); Oulakh (Zeera- Gurucharan Das *Dharmsala*) Khose Kotla (Zeera-Sukhchain *Dharmsala*); Khose Kotla (Zeera-Sangat Das *Dharmsala*); Datehwal (Zeera-Mohar Singh *Dharmsala*); Gatta Mull Singh (Zeera-Hafiz Zeeva, *Dharmsala*); Choohar Chuk (Choohar Chak- Bibi Shiv Karan, *Dharmsala*); Dhaodhur (Moga-Ghumanda Ram, *Dharmsala*); Muddkee (Moga-Bhai Rao Dev *Dharmsala*); Mutwanee (Moga-Salaima, *Dharmsala*); Choorchuk (Moga-Ganga Ram, *Dharmsala*); Baree Talwandi Sadda Singh (Moga-Keshar Das, *Dharmsala*); Saldeeru Sadda Singh (Moga-Bhai Wazira, *Dharmsala*); Daulatpur (Moga-Hari Das, *Dharmsala*); Koera Amsa (Moga-Moti Ram, *Dharmsala*); Sultan Khan Wala (Sultan Khan Wala, *Dharmsala*); Jhanda Ilaqah Muktsar (- *Dharmsala*); Dharamkot Khas (Dharamkot- *Dharmsala*); Koer Amsa sadda Singh (-Nand Ram *Dharmsala*); Kot Kapura, (Kot Kapura *Dharmsala*); Harika-Nayan (Kot Kapura *Dharmsala*) Virak (Kot Kapura, *Dharmsala*); Mahima Sarje (Kot Kapura, *Dharmsala*); Jaito (Kot Kapura, *Dharmsala*): Early British Documents.

<sup>13</sup> Besides the names of the nine *Dharmsalas*; at Rajina, Chanar, Kokri, *Dharmsala* Bhai Sahib at Kose, Saleena, Khajur Marri, Saleena, Nange ki Sarai, *Dharsala* Charan Das in Ferozepur city, no other religious establishment in Ferozepur is mentioned by the *Panda* Records.

<sup>14</sup> The Early British Documents.

<sup>15</sup> Dharamkot Bagga (Batala- Gurdial, Pucca *Dharmsala*); Batala City (Btala- *Dharmsala*); Kherah (Batala- Mela Ram, *Dharmsala*); Jalalachuk (Batala- Atma Ram, *Dharmsala*); Shri Hargobindpur (Shakargarh- *Dharmsala*).

Also, there were two *deras* situated at Tahli Sahib and Dera Baba Nanak.<sup>16</sup> Records show two *thakardwaras* at Tajjian and Balewal.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, there were two shrines situated at Jejanwala and Kot Naina.<sup>18</sup> The only *Akhara* in Gurdaspur district was of Saran Das Rorawnwala at Batala. Thus, according to the British records, there were twelve *Udāsī* religious establishments in the Gurdaspur district, whereas the *Panda Vahi* Records mention only two *Dharmshalas* at Dharmkot Bagga.

The British Documents mention a dozen *dharamshalas* in Jalandhar, whereas *Panda Vahi* records mention six only.<sup>19</sup> The only shrine at Kartarpur was of Mast Ram.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, the existence of two dozen *dharmshalas* was found in Ludhiana district, whereas *Panda Vahi* records mention only six.<sup>21</sup>

Besides this, there were districts having less than a dozen *Udāsī* centers. The District of Gujranwala had four *Dharamshalas*;<sup>22</sup> besides an *Akhara*, a

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<sup>16</sup> Two *deras*: Takhee Sahib (Batala-Tahli Sahib) and Dera Baba Nanak (Batala-Bawa Sant Ram).

<sup>17</sup> Two *Thakardwaras*: Tajjian (Batala-Saran Das) and Balewal (Batala-Gian Das).

<sup>18</sup> Jejanwala (Batala- Sahib Anoop Singh) and Kot Naina (Shakargarh-Ram Kaur).

<sup>19</sup> Lissura (Phillour-Bhagwan Das) Roorka Kalan (Phillour-Gurdial Singh); Sultanpur (Phillour-Saroo Das); Bassian (Phillour-Gyan Das); Bhangeela (Phillour-Gian Das); Sajjanwala (Jalandhar-Sadhu Ram); Kalenwan (Jalandhar- Sawan Das); Gohar Kalan (Jalandhar-Narain Das); Hooraree (Jalandhar-Bhagat Singh); Gumharah (Allawalpur-Prem Das); Talee (Nakodar-Ram Das) and at Chwgadee (Pholree-Bastee Ram).

<sup>20</sup> The Early British Documents.

<sup>21</sup> Jassowal (Akalgarh-Sukhramdas Dharmshala); Khaddour (Akalgarh-Saran Das Dharmshala); Schohee (Akalgarh-Brahmshah Dharmshala); Jaspaul (2) (Sahnewal-Choochar Dharmshala); Jamaitpur (Sidhrawan-Murataa Dharmshala); Sidherwan (Sidhrawan-Nathoo Dharmshala); Sahnewal Khas (Sahnewal Dharmshala); Jaspaul (sahnewal Dharmshala); Rayian (Bharatgarh Dharmshala); Panjaytha (Bharatgarh Dharmshala); Chander (Bharatgarh Dharmshala); Gmaydipur (Bharatgarh Dharmshala); Salloudhi (Khanna Dharmshala); Heran (Jagraon Dharmshala); Mohee (Akalgarh Dharmshala); Lattala (Pakhowal Dharmshala); Racheen (Pakhowal Dharmshala); Racheen (Pakhowal Dharmshala); Mahrma Burra (Pakhowal Dharmshala); Khaddour (Akalgarh Dharmshala); Chuprah (Pehowa Dharmshala); Murtagapur (Pehowa Dharmshala); Chappar (Pakhowal Dharmshala); Opul (Bharatgarh Dharmshala).

<sup>22</sup> *Dharmshala* Sukh Ram Das at Wazirabad, Dharamshala Tehal Das at Pindi Bhattian, *Dharmshala* Mohi Das at Shekhupur, Dharamshala Mehar Das at Chabhee Sindwan; and 1-Akhara (Akhara Baba Sidki Das in Gujranwala City), and a Samadh of Mihan Sahib at Sohian.

*Samadh*, a *Darbar* and a Temple.<sup>23</sup> Khangarh had eight *Dharmsalas*.<sup>24</sup> The total number of *Dharmsalas* in Jhang was five.<sup>25</sup> In Gujarat, there were three *Udāsī* centers; an *akhara*, an *asthan* and a *dharmsala*.<sup>26</sup> The only *dharmsala* at Dera Ismail Khan was of Baba Sital Das. The only *samadh* at Jhelum was of Arbel Singh and the only *Akhara* at Kapurthala was of Gurdial Landala.

The other district with major concentration of twenty three *Udāsī* centres was Lahore. It had eleven *dharmsalas*, eight *deras*, an *akhara*, a temple, a *samadh* and a ground to its name.<sup>27</sup> Shahpur had three *Dharmsalas*.<sup>28</sup> Shekhupur had four *dharmsalas* and three *darbars*.<sup>29</sup> Sialkot had two *dharmsalas* and two *darbars*.<sup>30</sup> *Panda Vahi* Records mention one *dera* each at Lahore and Sialkot. Montgomery had a *dera* Bhai Phuman Shan and a *dharmsala Katcha Puccha*. Multan and Shahabad were having one *Dharmsala* each at Lacchman Chowka and Charepur Sahabad respectively.

The *Udāsī* Institutions which had come up during the first half of the eighteenth century and had continued to develop during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and afterwards, included the *akharas*, the *deras*, the *asthans*, the

<sup>23</sup> *Akhara* (Akhara Baba Sidki Das in Gujranwala City), a *Samadh* (Mihan Sahib at Sohian), a *Darbar* (Nankana Sahib, Mohan Lal Das at Chuhan Khana), and a Temple (Hargobind at Hafizabad).

<sup>24</sup> Charan Das at Kanjar, Kishan Das Kanjar, Veer Bhan at Gurmaharaja, Charan Das at Ahmedpur, Mohi Das at Ghalloan, *Dharamsala* at Ghalloan, Sunder Das at Jatooe and *Dharamsala* at Jatooe.

<sup>25</sup> Bhai Sukhram Das at Rashidpur, Sourya Das at Maghiana, Narain Singh at Jhang, Maya Singh at Jhang and Lall Singh at Jhang).

<sup>26</sup> *Dharmsala* Bhag Gir in Karir Wala, *akhara Udasi* Sadhs of Baba Santokh Das and *asthan* of Keir Baba Nanak (Baba Nimana) in Gujarat district.

<sup>27</sup> Dera *Udasi* Sadhs at Alpa, Dera Bhai Pirthi at Manak, Dera Bhai Sucheta at Koti, Dera *Udasi* Sadhs at Mal Mokhal, Dera Kalan Bhai Pheru at Mianke-Morah, Dera Sant Parshad at Saydpur, Dera *Udasi* Sadh Har Parshad at Kamaske, Dera Khurd or Dera Bhai Narain Das at Khanke Morrah. *Akhara* (Akhara Mela Ram at Nangal Sadhan), Temple of Jagannath Hujra, and *Samadhs* of Bba Sarup Das Bedi at Pakpattan and Pourial ground Ram saran at Thanesair.

<sup>28</sup> *Dharmsala* Gurmukh Das, Saran Das, and Sunder Das all at Sahiwal Town.

<sup>29</sup> *Dharmasala*- Raojee Faquir at Moodhwala, Pran Das at Dhing, Mai Nakkain at Shekhupur and one *Dharmasala* at Maha Devi. *Darbar* Nankana Sahib, Bal Karira Sahib, Mal Asthan Guru Nanak Ram Dial all at Nankana Sheikhpur.

<sup>30</sup> *Dharmasala* at (Noonar and *Dharmasala* at Kothi Faqir Chand) and 2-Darbars (Darbar Baoli Sahib at Sialkot and Roree Sahib at Aminabad).



*thakardwaras*, the *gurdwaras*, the *darbars*, the *temples* and the *samadhs*. However, the institution called *dharmsala* outnumbered all of them. Even, the *Panda Vahi* Records confirm the existence of sixty three *dharmsals* in the Punjab,<sup>31</sup> with Amritsar leading the other districts with twenty one *dharmsals* to its credit.<sup>32</sup>

The reasons for constructing the maximum number of the *dharmsalas*, must have been there, because such centres acted not only as shelter for the visitors and travellers but also provided food to them. This benevolent act served the task of preaching the religious doctrines as well. It is not known whether these *dharmsals* charged the visitors or not, but going by the nature of the *Udāsīs* religious practices, it seems that the visitors willingly, might have been contributing to the institution of *Langar*. The doors of the *dharmsals* were open to all the people without any religious bias. The documentary sources indicate that the *Udāsī sadhs* often visited these places along with their disciples.<sup>33</sup>

Both the unpublished archival and the *Panda Vahi* sources mention that the total number of the *dharmsals* in the Punjab during the first half of the nineteenth century was over one hundred and eighty.<sup>34</sup> The *Panda Vahi* records mention only the *dharmsalas* and the *deras*, whereas the British records mention the existence of eighteen *akharas*, besides other thirty seven institutions like the *dharmsalas*, the *deras*, the *asthans*, the *thakardwaras*, the *gurdwaras*, the *darbars*, the *temples*, the *samadhs* and the *shrines*.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Amritsar-21; Ferozepur-9; Jalandhar-6; Ludhiana-6; Lahore-6 (5+1 dera Khanke in Lahore city); Hoshiarpur- 4; Sialkot-3 (2+1 dera Sanbhal at Eminabad city in Sialkot); Shahpur-1; Shekhupur-2; Gujranwala-2; Gujrat-2; Ambala-1; Gurdaspur-1; Kangra-1: The above information has been taken from the *Panda* Records cited in Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*; Appendix 1, pp. 122- 135.

<sup>32</sup> The total number of *deras* according to the *Panda* Records in the Punjab was two.

<sup>33</sup> During the interview, Mahamandleshwar Swami Surinder Muni of Naya Akhara Haridwar, informed that *Mahants* have to travel from one place to other as it is part of their religious discourse: 4-02-2011 at Panchvati, Dehradun.

<sup>34</sup> According to the combined list of British Documents and *Panda* Records the number of *dharmsals* was 119 + 63 respectively which comes out to be 182.

<sup>35</sup> British and *Panda* Records brings us to the conclusion that there existed 182 (*dharmsals*) + 18 (*akharas*) + 37 (other institutions) + 2 (*deras*) the total of 239 institutions.

The other sources, published British Records, such as the Census Reports, District Gazetteers and Settlement Reports, mention only one *dera* at Gurdaspur and one at Hoshiarpur respectively. There were only two *Udāsī* Shrines at Hoshiarpur, only one *Akhara* at Gujranwala, two *Dharmshalas* at Gurdaspur and two at Rawalpindi. There was one *Udāsī Langar* building at Village Heran in Jagraon Tehsil of district Ludhiana; another *Udāsī* establishment was Ber Baba Nanak at Sialkot town. The total number of *Udāsī* centers was twelve, out of which the number of *Dharmshalas* was five, *Akhara* one, *Deras* two, shrines two and one *Langar* building and an *Udāsī* establishment Ber Baba Nanak at Sialkot.

The emergence of large number of the *dharmshalas* indicate the upcoming of the *Udāsīs* as a sect during the nineteenth century. Nearly fifty percent of the total *Udāsī* centers were in the country side. In cities like Amritsar, Lahore, Sialkot, Gujrat, Gujranwala and Batala, the size of centers was much larger. However, the largest proportion of the *Udāsī* centers was in the core region of the dominions of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the upper portions of the Jalandhar, Bari and Rachna Doabs. New centers were coming up in newly conquered areas. About seventy five percent of the *Udāsī* centers were found in the districts of Amritsar, Lahore, Gurdaspur, Gujranwala, Sheikhpur and Jalandhar.<sup>36</sup> Over sixty establishments were found located in the districts of Ferozepur and Ludhiana.<sup>37</sup> *Udāsī* centers were established in the territories of other Sikh rulers or even outside the Punjab.<sup>38</sup> The States of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot,

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<sup>36</sup> The establishments found before the time of Ranjit Singh were mostly in cities like Amritsar, Lahore, Batala, Gujranwala and Gujrat, whereas the establishments that came up during time of Ranjit Singh and his successors were situated mostly in the county-side in villages: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*, p. 25 fn. 10.

<sup>37</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 23.

<sup>38</sup> The best known *deras* in the Patiala state are the *deras* of Bharam Sarup at Pail; the *dera* of Sukham das, whose Samadh is also revered, at Sirhind; the *dera* of Bhai Nama whose Samadh is also worshipped at Longowal; the *dera* of Avdhut and Thulewal; that of Barham Deo at Katron; that of Ram Das at Ladha; and that of Bawa Bhrham Das, whose Samadh is also revered at Raesar. At Barnala is the *Dera* of Balram and the samadh of one of his, chelas, Bawa Dyal Das is also worshipped. At Tasoli (in Banur Tehsil) is the *Dera* of Tahal Das; at Nabha in this state is the *Dera* of Sant Das, and at Banur of Santokh Das where

Malerkotla also had a considerable number of the *Udāsī* establishments. In Patiala State, the number of establishments was over a score.<sup>39</sup>

The *Udāsī Deras* and *Akharas* which had come up before the establishment of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule enjoyed the largest *dharmarth* grants. The majority of the establishments newly patronized by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors were the *dharmsalas* which enjoyed grants of rather small value, though they constituted more than 70 percent of the total establishments.<sup>40</sup> The *Udāsī* establishments spread into the districts of Gujrat, Sailkot, Jhang, Ludhiana, Shahpur, Multan, Khangarh and Dera Ismail Khan. But the number of *Udāsī* centers in these new districts did not exceed one score. Nearly eighty percent of these institutions remained concentrated in the old districts. The *Udāsī* centers adding hardly a few more to their numbers continued up to the British times. However, they developed more, both in numbers and area, under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, as they flourished more under the 18<sup>th</sup> century Sikh rulers than under the Mughals.

The majority of these centres established during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, traced their origins to the past. But a few linked themselves with one or another *Dhuans*, whereas majority of them linked themselves with the *Udāsī bakhshishes*.<sup>41</sup> For example, more than a hundred establishments were found associated with the *bakhshish* of Bhai Pheru or Sangat Sahib and about a score of establishments were associated with the *bakhshishes* of Mihan Sahib, Bhagat

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there is also the Samadh at which the offerings are made at the Dusshra. At Tarkhan Majra (Sirhind) is the dera of Gursaran Das at Kaddon (Pail) that of Tahal Das where the Samadh Bawa Siddhu Das is revered. At Akar is the dera of Bishan Das. At Patiala is the dera of Maghni Ram. The Mahant of this dera is Sri- Mahant of the Udāsīs. Bawa Maghni Ram was a famous *Udasi* of Mian Sahib Dhan, who celebrated a great bhandara. He built a Chhatta in Patiala, and the street containing it is known by Chhatta Maghni Ram. Another *Udasi* Dera is that of Samadhan is also in Patiala: *Punjab State Gazetteers*, Vol. XVII, A, Phulkian States, Patiala, Jind and Nabha, 1904, p-78.

<sup>39</sup> *Census of the Punjab 1881*, Vo. III, Appendix B, Table No. VIII A, Calcutta, 1883.

<sup>40</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*, p. 25 fn. 10.

<sup>41</sup> Bhagat Bagvanea, Suthreshahea, sangat Sahibra, Mihan Sahea, Bakhat-malie, Jit Malia; Giani Gian Singh and Major Leech regard the Suthre- Shahias as district and separate from the Udāsī. See Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, p. 283; notes on the Religion of Sikhs and other sects inhabiting the Punjab: *Foreign / Secret consultation*, 20 Dec. 1845, No.144.

Bhagwan, Jit Mal and others.<sup>42</sup> *Dera Fakir Udāsīan* is not the only such example, still there existed several other centres which were not affiliated to either a *dhuan* or a *bakhshish*. The Revenue Records of Jhang tehsil and district of the year 1946-1947, mention a *dera* as *Dera Fakir Udāsīan*. The *dera* was in the name of *Mahant* Thakur Das son of Tara Chand. *Mahant* Thakur Das was having a vast property in the fourteen villages in the name of *Dera Fakir Udāsīan* during the Sikh rule.<sup>43</sup>

On the whole, the *Udāsī* establishments may be divided into three categories: (i) centres established by the *Udāsī Sadhs*; (ii) centres at places associated with the Sikh Gurus; (iii) centres connected with the personalities associated with Guru Nanak. The first category included the *akharas* and the *samadhs* of the *Udāsī Mahants*. The second consisted of old Sikh Shrines associated with Guru Nanak, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Har Gobind. The third category consisted of the places associated with Sri Chand, Baba Buddha and his descendants. It is obvious that the *Udāsīs* established their control over some of the most important centers of the orthodox Sikhs during the period of the Sikh rule. They also established centers at places which had certain degree of sanctity in the eyes of the orthodox Sikhs. However, there were many establishments and village *Dharmshalas* which were founded by the *Udāsīs* on their own initiative at places which had nothing to do with the Sikh past. The *Udāsī* Orders and their establishments were more prominent and influential than any other religious Order of the Sikhs under the Sikh rule.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Vahi Udasin*, Pandit Shiv Parshad, Haridwar as cited by Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p.22.

<sup>43</sup> *Revenue records from Pakistan from the office of Financial Commissioner Relief and Re-Habilitation East Punjab 1946-47*, kept with the Director of land Records, Jalandhar : Basta Jhang, *Hadbast* no's 69, 71, 97, 98, 166, 203, 209, 211, 322, 333, 340, 336, 337, 338; At Jhang it had property in villages : Vasu Asthana, Atharan Hazoori, Malkana, Rasidpur, Hinduan Musalmana, Amrana Janoobi, Doal, Chokan Khanpur, Pritko Sadhana and at Shorkot in villages: Haveli Badhad Shah, Garh Maharaja, Bela Kmalana, Jivana, Rodd, See, Appendix VIII.

<sup>44</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh tradition*, pp. 43-44; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "Udasi Establishments under Sikh Rule", *Journal of Regional History*, 1, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980, pp. 70-87.

### III

The *Udāsī* institutions found established before the establishment of the Sikh rule, included the *akhara* of Baba Santokh Das, the *samadh* of Baba Mihan Sahib, the Dera of Bai Pirthi, the *Dera-i-kalan* and *Dera-i-khurd* of Bhai Pheru and the Dera of Bhai Phuman Shah.<sup>45</sup> The earliest of these *akharas* were the *Dera-i-kalan* of Bhai Pheru at *Khan Ke Morh* in tehsil Qasur of district Lahore and the *Samadh* of Baba Mihan Sahib at Sohian in Gujranwala district. The *Dera-i-kalan* was founded by Bhai Pheru.<sup>46</sup> The *Samadh* was founded by Lakshmi Das, the first disciple-successor of Mihan Sahib who is believed to have been a contemporary of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>47</sup> Both the establishments came to have a large following known respectively as *Sangat Sahibias* and *Mihan Sahibias*.<sup>48</sup> Important branches of these centres developed in the districts of Lahore and Amritsar.<sup>49</sup>

Amongst those *Udāsī* centres which flourished during late 18<sup>th</sup> century the prominent were the *akhara* of Pritam Das, the shrines of Sahib Ram Kaur and his son Sahib Anoop Singh, the *Darbar* at Nankana Sahib, *dera* at Nankana Sahib, the *dera* at Alpa, the *akhara* at Gujrat and the *dharmasala* at Rashidpur and Noonar. Most of them continued to receive Patronage from Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors. They were found located in the districts of Amritsar,

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<sup>45</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No.219, case 1; *ibid.*, 14 January 1853, no.299, case 2; *ibid.*, 27 May 1853, No.202, cases 32, 33, 36; *ibid.*, 23 June 1854, No. 204-205, Case 13.

<sup>46</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January, 27 May 1853, No. 202, case 32; Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, 1280-81; Major Leech, "Notes on the religion of the Sikhs and other Sects of the Punjab", *Foreign / Secret Consultation*, 20 Dec. 1845, No. 144.

<sup>47</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No.202 case 36; *Foreign / Secret consultation*, 20 Dec. 1845, No. 144; Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 1282.

<sup>48</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No.202 case 36; *Foreign / Secret consultation*, 20 Dec. 1845, No. 144; Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, 1282.

<sup>49</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219, cases 1-2; *ibid.*, 14 January 1853, No. 229 case 2; *ibid.*, 27 May, 1853, No. 202 cases 32, 33, 36.

Lahore, Gurdaspur, Sheikhpura, Gujrat, Jhang and Sialkot.<sup>50</sup> Founded in the second decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the *Dera-i-kalan* of Bhai Pheru was one of the oldest and most venerated institutions in the Punjab.<sup>51</sup>

Under Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors a considerable number of new centres came into prominence in the old districts in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The number of new establishments in the new districts of Dera Ismail Khan, Khangarh, Multan and Shahpur was rather small. The old *Udāsī* centers flourished more during this period, because they had continued to receive a considerable number of fresh grants under Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors, besides the old ones being invariably confirmed. Several of the new establishments of this period had enjoyed grants worth over 500 rupees a year. Among these were the *akhara* of Mahant Balanand and *akhara* of Mahant Ghamand Das in the city of Amritsar and the *akhara* of Baba Sant Das in Gurdaspur.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 16 April, 1852, No.49, case 9; *ibid*, 7 January 1853, No.219, cases 2,16,17; *ibid*, 14 January 1853, No.241 cases 21, 22, 23, 29; *ibid*, 29 May 1853, No. 2020, cases 30, 34; *ibid*, 23 June 1854, No. 204-05, case 1.

<sup>51</sup> It was situated on high road between Lahore and Multan. One dozen Mahants sat on the gaddi or Dera-i-Kalan from 1713 to 1846. After the death of Bhai Pheru in 1713, he was succeeded by Charan Das, Sech Das ( ? ), Jagat Bhagat, Bindraban, Mali Sahib, Khem Sahib, Guditta Sahib, Jai Singh Sahib (d.1792) Tehal Das (d.1814) Ram Das (d.1849), Gurmukh Sahib (d.1836), Brahmnnath (d.1847) as Dhain Das succeeded in 1847 and continued into the British period. This establishment received Patronage from the Mughals and the Sikh rulers and also from Qardars, Lambardars and Zamindars. Many grants that it got in late 18<sup>th</sup> century, were confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and he also added fresh grants. By the end of Sikh rule, it was enjoying revenue free grants worth over 6500 rupees a year. In the 1760's, this establishment enjoyed donations received from the Zamindars. Bhai Gurditta and Mahant Tehl Das had received grants from Sardar Lehna Singh Bhangi and Sardar Ram Singh Nakkai in 1785 and 1798 respectively. The revenue free grants enjoyed by this dera exactly amounted to 5602 rupees a year. Bhai Pheru and Mrhants Tahl Das, Bhai Gurditta, Ram Das, Bhai Gurmukh and Dhian Das were the regional grantees who had enjoyed grants left to them by their predecessors. Bhai Pheru is said to have enjoyed grants from the Delhi emperors, received in 1693: see *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No. 202, case 32.

<sup>52</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No.219, cases 3, 4, 12, 19, 20; *ibid*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 241, cases 24, 25, 28; *ibid*, 23 June 1854, No. 204-05, case 7; *ibid*, 4 July 1856, No.152, case 46; *ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 260, case 1; *ibid*, 13 Feb. 1857, No. 294, case 30.

In 1850's, *Dera-i-kalan* of Bhai Pheru had 200 *sadhs*, many servants served *langar* to the visitors and the poor ones; and had over 15 branches in the Punjab. Some important branches of this *dera* were: *Dera-i-khurd* Bhai Pheru, also known as Dera Bhai Narain Das; Dera Bhai Pirthi at Manak; *dharmsala* Baba Guria at Jabboke; the *dharmsala* at Sethpur in Lahore district and the *akhara* of Bara Santokh Das at Amritsar.<sup>53</sup>

Baba Santokh Das, who founded the well known *Akhara* Brahmbutta,<sup>54</sup> in the precincts of the Golden Temple at Amritsar in 1753 A.D., was one of the disciples of Bhai Pheru.<sup>55</sup> He died around 1790 A.D. and was succeeded by his disciple Apbrahm in 1833 A.D. Apbrahm was further succeeded by Brahmhari,<sup>56</sup> and he was succeeded by *Mahant* Brahmbuta and Niranjan Das.<sup>57</sup> Towards the

<sup>53</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 229, case 2; *ibid*, 23 June 1853, No. 204-05, case 10, *Ibid*, 27 May 1853, No.202, Case 36.

<sup>54</sup> Giani Gain Singh, *Tawarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 69. Even today the original *akhara* is situated at the same place but its residential head quarter now exists at chownk Manna singh, Pipal wali Gali where the present Mahant Ravinder Das Stays. During the Blue Star operation in 1984, this *akhara* was almost destroyed; interview with Mahant Ravinder Das on 27, Feb 2007.

<sup>55</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, Np. 219, case 1. Regarding foundation of the *akhara* Brahmbutta different options have been given by contemporary and near contemporary writers. According to Kesar Singh Chhibar it was founded in 1760's see *Bansawalinama Dasan Patshahian Ka* (ed. S.S. Kohli) in Parkh, Punjab University, Chandigarh 1972, Vol.II, p.183; Giani Gian Singh gives year 1754 in *Tawasikh Sri Amritsar*, Kendri Singh Sabha Committee, Amritsar, 1977 p.68 and year 1781 in Giani Gain Singh, *Panth Parkash*, p. 1276-77. Giani Gian Singh writes that Santokh Singh was 4<sup>th</sup> successor of Bhai Pheru and he was succeeded by Narain Das, Baba Gurbaksh Bhai Guria; see Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 68-69.

<sup>56</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219, case 1.

<sup>57</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 69; The present incumbent Mahant Ravinder Das gave this information during interview on 27-2-2007 bout the Mahants of the Dera.  
 (1) Mahant Santokh Das 1754-1793 A.D. (2) Apbrahm 1793-1835 A.D.  
 (3) Brahmhari 1835-1852 A.D. (4) Brahmbuta 1852-1885 A.D.  
 (5) Niranjn Das 1885-1915 A.D. (6) Paragdas 1915-1935 A.D.  
 (7) Jai Ram Das 1935-1942 A.D. (8) Sadhu Ram 1942-15.9.42 (only 8-9 months)  
 (9) Lakshman Das 30.10.1942-23.12.52 (10) Rahan Das 8-1-53—4.10.58  
 (11) Bikram Das 7-12-58 —16.2.1981 (12) Ravinder Das 16.2.1981— till date;  
 see also; Anita Surinder, *Twarikh Lahore Amritsar*, Premier Publication, Amritsar 2005, pp. 232, 233; Manwinder Singh, "Amritsar De Derian Da Sarvekhan", Punjab Histroy Conference proceedings, Patiala, 2002, pp.366-369.

end of Sikh rule, it was receiving nearly 18,000 rupees a year in *dharmarth*.<sup>58</sup> In the 1840's, it had about 200 resident *Sadhus*, well versed in the Sikh scriptures, about 70 musicians, along with providing accommodation and *langar* to the poor.<sup>59</sup> The well known Sangalwala Akhara in Amritsar, situated just outside Golden Temple in Bazar Mai Sewan, was founded by Pritam Das in 1776 A.D.<sup>60</sup> Pritam Das was an important *Mahant* in late 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>61</sup> After Pritam Das's death in 1787 he was succeeded by Brahmrup and *Mahant* Sarup Anand from 1815 to 1833, and *Mahant* Sham Das became the next *Mahant*.<sup>62</sup> According to the early British records, all *Mahants* of this *akhara* enjoyed revenue-free lands from the Sikh rulers, getting nearly 3,000 rupees a year towards the end of Sikh rule. This *akhara* had 40 resident *Sadhus* and ten Brahmans, besides a number of attendants.<sup>63</sup> Besides Brahmbutta Akhara and Sangalwala Akhara, there were ten more important *akharas* in Amritsar.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>58</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219, Case 1.

<sup>59</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 1.

<sup>60</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 2; In Gaini Gian Singh's view, the *akhara* came to be founded in 1788 A.D., *Tawarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 72 and Giani Gain Singh, *Panth Parkash*, pp.1276-1277; Anita Surinder, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 230 refers to the year 1771; Mahant Ananta Nand Udasin, *Nirvan Pritam Charit* on p.35 while giving successors list of Mahants refer to the foundation Year by Pritam Das in 1720 A.D where as on p.165-166 very clearly refers to year 1771 A.D.

<sup>61</sup> *Foreign/Political Consultation*, 20 Dec. 1845, No.144. *Foreign / Political proceeding*, 27 March 1853, No.202 case 36 mentions that Sect of *Fakirs* Known as *Nangas* owed their origin to Pritam Das; Giani Gain Singh, *Panth Parkash*, 1272-74; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p.33.

<sup>62</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No.219, case 2; According to Gaini Gian Singh the succeeding Mahant to Pritam Das were Saddha Nand, Parma Nand, Charn Das Budh Prakash and Hira Nand; *Tawarikh Sri Amritsar*, 72; Mahant Anantanand Udasin in a Personal interview in Jan.2007 and on p.35 *Nirvan Pritam Charit* gives is Pritam Das (1777-1888) Bk, Brahm Nijroop (1888-1895) Bk, Nityanan (1895-1900) Bk, Parmanand (1900-1927) Bk, Charan Das (1927-1946) Bk, Bindh Prakash (1946-1957) Bk, Hira Nand (1957-1989) Bk Sant Ram (1989-2012) Bk, Amrita Nand (2012-2018) Bk Narvada Nand (2018-2035) Bk, Present incumbent Ananta Nand (2035- till date).

<sup>63</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, case 2.

<sup>64</sup> Brahmanand Udasin gives a list of 43 *akharas* at Amritsar, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p.147-161; Whereas Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 68-76 provides the list of 12 *Akharas*: Akhara Santokh Das, Ghamanda Das, Chitta akhara, Tehal Das, Bala Nand akhara Prem Das, Sangalwala, Kashiwala Katra Maha Singh, Nawan Akhara Kashiwala Sultanwind, Pragdas, Bibeksar, Akhara Samadhianwala.



## IV

In his work *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, published in 1923, Brahmanand Udasin has given a long list of the *Udāsī* establishments in the Punjab during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first chapter of this work deals with the rise of the *Udāsīs*. In the second chapter, he writes about the meetings between Baba Sri Chand and Guru Arjan Dev. He has given a detailed account of the *Udāsī* establishments scattered at different places in more than a hundred pages. The third chapter, describes Guru Nanak's tour as an *Udāsī*. Brahmanand tries to prove Guru Nanak as a part and parcel of *Udāsī* movement. In the fourth chapter, the praise is lavished upon the *sadhus* in general. The fifth chapter is sort of a biographical sketch of Baba Sri Chand. Significantly, the Sixth chapter has been exclusively devoted to the Nankana Sahib tragedy. It also gives in detail the circumstances responsible for the decline of the *Udāsīs*. The seventh chapter is about the *Udāsī Matre*, *dhuans* various *bakshishes* and sub-*bakshishes*. However, here, we are concerned with the second chapter of this work that contains details regarding the *Udāsī* establishments and the question of their status in the changing historical situation.

Brahmanand gives the list of about eighty one *Udāsī* establishments in the Punjab with their numerical strength varying in different districts or at different places. However, the core area of the *Udāsī* establishments was found located in the districts of Amritsar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana and Gurdaspur.<sup>65</sup> About forty four establishments, such as *Asthans/Akharas/Deras*, have been mentioned by Brahmanand in the district of Amritsar, which were generally affiliated to

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<sup>65</sup> Amritsar (44), Ludhiana (7), Ferozepur (5), Multan (4), Shekhupura (3), Malerkotla (3), Gurdaspur (2), Jhang (2), Hoshiarpur (2), and one each at Bhawalpur, Lahore, Montgomery, Layallpur, Ambala, Karnal, Faridkot, Gujarat, Sahiwal, and Bijnaur.

different *Udāsī* organizations, with Sangat Sahibias alone having nearly twelve *Udāsī* establishments.<sup>66</sup>

The case studies of some of the famous *Udāsī* centres, as given by Brahmanand, may help us to understand the changing position of the *Udāsīs* and their centres during the period of Akali-*Udāsī* conflict. In the city of Amritsar, *Akhara Brahmbuta* in the Golden Temple premises in a corner was established by Baba Santokh Das, desciple of Bhai Pheru. He was succeeded by Apbrahm and Brahm Hari.<sup>67</sup> Baba Balanand established Akhara Baba Balanand in 1787. *Guru Granth Sahib* was daily recited here alongwith the worship of Hindu deities *Rama and Krishna*. Mahant Hari Prasad was managing the establishment in 1923. On inquiry it was found that Mahant Chander Parshad served as Mahant of this centre till 1982. He was succeeded by Mahant Taran Parshad, who is the present incumbent.<sup>68</sup> Nirbansar Akhara was established in 1788 by Pritam Das. It is related to Mihan Sahib *Bakshish*.<sup>69</sup> Nirban Adwait Narayan established Kashiwala Akhara in 1789 in Mohalla Durga Kund, Amritsar. It was also famous as Akhara Baba Mela Ramji.<sup>70</sup> Akhara Chhatewala was established by Mahant Magni Ram in 1786.<sup>71</sup> Baba Ghumanda Das established Beriwal or Ghamanda Das Akhara. Out of his four disciples, Mahant Charan Das and Gyan

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<sup>66</sup> Brahmanand *Udasin*, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 161: Almast (7), Mian Sahias (5), Balu Hasna (5), Bedi Sat Kartari (3), Suthre Shah (2), Bhagat Bhagwanie (2). The Sodi, Diwana Sahib, Ram Diali and Phul Shah had one each.

<sup>67</sup> Foreign/Political Proceedings, 7 January 1853, no-219, case 1; Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, Amar Printing Press, Sakhar Sindh, 1923, pp. 121-128.

<sup>68</sup> Visited the site on November 22, 2006.

<sup>69</sup> Mahant Pritam Das, mahant Brahm Sarup, mahant Sarupanandi, Mahant Sarabdyal, Mahant Shyam Das, Mahant Ramkishan, Mahant Gyan Das, Mahant Nand Ramji, Mahant Gobind Ram served this institution: Brahmanand *Udasin*, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 148.

<sup>70</sup> Mahant Kishan Dev, Mahant Ganpat Dev, Mahant Basambar Dev, Mahant Trin Dev, Mahant Hargyan Dev, Mahant Harsevak Dev. Mahant Harvans Dev, Mahant Parshotam Dev, Mahant Lachman Dev: Brahmanand *Udasin*, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, Amar Printing Press, Sakhar Sindh, 1923, p. 148.

<sup>71</sup> Mahant Mihan Sahib, Lakhmir Sahib, Mahant Magni Ram, Mahant Prag Das, Mahant Brahmni, Mahant Chetan Dev, Mahant Gobind Das were the other Mahants of this Akhara: Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 149. On personal visit and inquiry the names of other Mahants who served this institution Narayan Das, Bhagwan Das, And Goal Das were collected.

Das established *Asthans* at Batala and Gurdaspur and Baba Puran Das established an *Asthan* at village Gandiwind, tehsil Taran Taran in Amritsar and Bawa Bahadur Das established another Asthan at village Munde Pind.<sup>72</sup> Chita Akhara was established by Ganga Ram in 1789. In 1923, *Mahant* Lachhman Das was looking after it.<sup>73</sup> *Asthan* Baba Kashi Das was established by *Mahant* Kashi Das of Shikarpur in 1897 after purchasing this land. Pandit Sarup Das was the *Mahant* of this *Asthan* in 1923.

Akhara Nirban or Tehal Das was completed by Tehal Das in 1788 in Amritsar. Other *Mahants* of this *Akhara* were Nirban Sangat Sahib *Sachi Dahri*, Brindaban, Pem Das, Tehal Das, Brahm Chetan, Kahsi Ram, Brahm Vishesh Ram, Dhyan Das, Amar Das, Gopal Das, Biram Das and Heera Das.<sup>74</sup> On inquiry, the names of the other Mahanats were found as Jagdish Das, Hari Das, Narayan Das, and Kartar Das. Akhara Ghee Mandi was established by Nirban Sant Das in 1790. He belonged to Lulliani, tehsil Kasur of District Lahore. In 1923, Harnam Das was looking after the *Akhara*.<sup>75</sup> *Asthan* Bawa Mela Ram was established by Mela Ram in 1803.<sup>76</sup> *Mahant* Charan Das's centre at Katra Ramgarhia was started by Sant Deva Das, from the *Dhuan* of Almast. In 1923, *Mahant* Charan Das was looking after the *Asthan*. *Asthan* Baba Bagta Sahib Bibeksar was established by the *Mahants* belonging to Patiala. The *samadh* of Baba Bagta Sahib was constructed within the premises of the *Asthan*. *Mahant*

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<sup>72</sup> Other *Mahants* who served this institution were Baba Sangat Sahib Sachi Dari, Nirban Narayan Das, Bawa Gurbaksh sahib, Nirban Bawa Guria Sahib, Ghumanda Das, Mahant Charan Das, Saran Das, Seva Das, Mahant Prem Das, Shankar Das, Buta Ram. *ibid*, p. 149

<sup>73</sup> Sohan Das and Bachan Das served after Lachman Das as *Mahant* of the Akhara. On personal interview with the present Mahant Damodar Das in 2007; Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 150.

<sup>74</sup> Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 150.

<sup>75</sup> Other Mahants of the Akhara were; Nirban Mihan Sahib, Sant Das, Gopal Das, Damodar as, Harbhajan Das, Dyal Das, Gobind Das, Hira Das, Jivan Das, Mangal Das, Balak Das, Mian Ramji, *ibid*, p. 151. Bishan Das, Sarvan Das and Inder Das are the names of the successor Mahants serving the *Akhara* were given by the present Mahant of Naya Akhara Panchayati, on 22 November, 2009.

<sup>76</sup> Mela Ram Rattan, Bhagat Ram, Amar Das were other Mahants of this institution. *Ibid*, p. 151.

Kirpa Ram was looking after it in 1923.<sup>77</sup> *Akhara* Bibeksar was started in 1713 by Nirban Balak Ram.<sup>78</sup> Moti Ram, from Bhagat Bhagwania *Bakshish*, was the *Mahant* of this *Akhara* in 1923. Asthan Baba Dhian Das, Chowk Baba Atal was started by Bawa Dhian Das. It was being managed by Baba Nanak Parkash in 1923.<sup>79</sup>

*Asthan* Baba Brahm Sarbat Dev, Katra Dal Singh was established by Brahm Sarbat Dev. He purchased a piece of land from Sardar Charat Singh Kalewale and established this institution which is closely linked with Akhara Sangalwala.<sup>80</sup> *Mahant* Harnam Das was looking after it in 1923. *Asthan* Suthreshahi Chawalmandi *Chhati Khuhi* was established by Khushi Ram in 1744.<sup>81</sup> In 1923, Khudmasti Shah was managing the institution. *Asthan* Sangalwali, Loon Mandi, Amritsar, was established by Attar Das who belonged to Giljilawa tehsil in district Ludhiana.<sup>82</sup> Sri Ramji was managing it in 1923. *Asthan* Bawa Kalyan Das, Loon Mandi, Amritsar, was established in 1823 by Bawa Prem Das.<sup>83</sup> *Asthan* Bawa Dayal Das, Loon Mandi, Amritsar was established in 1823 by Prem Das. The succeeding *Mahants* were Sadhu Das and *Mahant* Surjan Das, Dayal Das and in 1923, Bhagat Das was looking after it. *Asthan* Bawa Mehr Das, Loon Mandi, was established by Prem Das in 1823.<sup>84</sup> *Asthan* Bawa Prem Das, Bazar Tokrian, Amritsar was established in 1843 by

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<sup>77</sup> Mela Ram Rattan, p. 152.

<sup>78</sup> Other Mahants of this institutions were Bawa Das, Jogi Das, Brahm Har Sukh Das, Jaiparkash, Ramsaran, Magni Ram, Bhagat Ram, Lakha Ram, Atma Ram, Moti Ram. *ibid*, p. 152.

<sup>79</sup> Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Sarpan*, p. 153.

<sup>80</sup> Other *Mahants* of this institution were Brahm Dev, Sarsti Das: Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 153.

<sup>81</sup> Other Mahants of this institution were; Khushi Shah, Pindi Shah, Jagan Shah, Karele Shah, Tinde Shah, Taran Shah, Pindi Shah, Hit Shah, Chit Shah, Joti Shah, Pashore Shah, Lahore Shah *ibid*, p. 153.

<sup>82</sup> Tarlok Das, Bashambar Das and Sri Ramji Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, pp. 153-154.

<sup>83</sup> Sadhu Das, Ram Das, Kalyan Das, present Mahant Charan Das, Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 154.

<sup>84</sup> Other Mahants of this Asthan were Sidqi Das, Sadhu Das, Bhagwan Das, Nanak Das, Mehr Das, and in 1923 Atam Das was managing the Astha. *ibid*, p. 55.

Prem Das.<sup>85</sup> *Asthan* Benawal, Loon Mandi, was established in 1843 by Sant Das. Jamna Das was succeeded by Atam Parkash in 1923.<sup>86</sup> *Asthan* Haveli, Loon Mandi, Gali Sunaran, was established by *Mahant* Rattan Das of Mihan Sahib *Bakshish*. *Asthan Mahant* Asha Nandi or Mai Mano, Katra Ramgarhia Amritsar was established by Asha Nandi of Balu Hasna *Dhuan* in 1823.<sup>87</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Darshan Das was established by Darshan Das in 1846 at Katra Sher Singh in Hathi Darwaja, Amritsar.<sup>88</sup> *Asthan* Nanakdwar, Chowk Lohgarh, Amritsar by *Mahant* Bal Mukand in 1853.<sup>89</sup> In 1923, Des Raj was its *Mahant*. *Asthan* Bawa Atma Ram, Kucha Jiwan Mania, was established by Bawa Atma Ram in 1858.<sup>90</sup> *Asthan* Beriwalla, Gali Tewarian, Amritsar was related to Guru Ram Rai *Bakshish*. After *Mahant* Basant Das, Bishan Das was the serving *Mahant* in 1923. *Asthan* Bawa Rattan Har, Lahori Darwza Amritsar, was established by Rattan Hari in 1863.<sup>91</sup> *Asthan* Bawa Mohan Shah, Katra Khazana, Amritsar, was established in 1746 by *Bawa* Mohan Shah.<sup>92</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Harnam Das, Katra Khazana, was established by Harnam Das and Hira Das. *Asthan Mahant* Tehl Das, Katra Karam Singh, was established by Tehl Das. Kahn Das Bedi *Udasi* was looking after it in 1923. *Asthan Mahant* Dyal Das, Katra Karam Singh, was built by Dyal Das. In 1923 Gulab Das was managing it.<sup>93</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Surdas, Katra Garbha Singh was established by Surdas. *Asthan Mahant* Ram Das, Gali Telianwali Amritsar, was established by *Mahant* Ram Das, in 1893.

<sup>85</sup> Mahi Das, Hira Das, Pritam Das, *ibid*, p. 155.

<sup>86</sup> Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Sarpan*, p. 155.

<sup>87</sup> Other Mahants of this *Asthan* were Mahant Ramanand, Sahija Nanad, Bhagwan Das, Krishnanand, Sadanand, Parmanand, and Brhmanand was the serving Mahant in 1923. *ibid*, p. 156

<sup>88</sup> Mahant Mela Ram, Garib Das, Amar Das, Ganesh Das, Kalyan Das, Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 156.

<sup>89</sup> Mahant Balmukand, Parmanad, Kalyan Das. *ibid*, p. 156.

<sup>90</sup> Other Mahants of this *Asthan* were Mata Karma Bai, Heera Ram, Jamna Das, and Narain Das was in 1923 : Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 157.

<sup>91</sup> Anant Das, Saligram, were succeeded by Harnam Das in 1923. *Ibid*, p. 157.

<sup>92</sup> Dhian Shah, Nain Shah, Bein Shah, Bahadur Shah, Buland Shah, Khand Shah, Mrijang Shah, Adhin Shah, Mithri Shah, Cheeche Shah, Narb Shah. Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 158.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, p. 158.

*Asthan* Bawa Sant Das Katra Nihal Singh, was established by Sant Das and Brahm Parkash. Brahm Parkash was looking after it in 1923. *Asthan* Bawa Muthir Shah was situated in Sultanwind, Lakkar Bazar. Hari Das was its *Mahant* in 1923.<sup>94</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Budh Das in Amritsar was started by Budh Das of Patiala. *Asthan* Chetan Das was established by Sunder Das of Balu Hasna *Dhuan*. *Asthan* Tota Ram was established by Bawa rahm Jug. *Asthan* Mahant Heera Das, Loon Mandi, was established by Heera Das in 1874. *Asthan* Brahm Hazoor was established in 1714 by Brahm Hazoor and it is associated with Brahm buta Akhara. *Asthan* Bawa Brahm Bhara, Katra Ramgarhia, was established by Brahm Bhara. Mai Sardi *Mahantani* of this *Asthan* became famous for her work. *Mahant* Krishan of this *Akhara* sold half of its land.<sup>95</sup> Narain Das was *Mahant* of *Vadda Thattian* or *Chhota Cheema* at Amritsar in 1923.<sup>96</sup>

The other important district with nearly five establishments was Ferozepur. *Asthan* Giani Gurmukh Das, was situated in village Kauni, Ferozepur. Gurmukh Das belonged to Balu Hasna *Dhuan*. He used to teach students at his place. Hari Parkash, his successor, worked very hard to strengthen the institution. *Asthan* Sant Tara Das, was at village Dhurkot, in district Ferozepur. *Sant* Tara was Brahmin and disciple of Heera Das. He lived in a small hut at Chundiana and was known for his generosity and had great knowledge of herbal medicines.<sup>97</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Bhagwan Das was in village Khirkian wala in Muktsar tehsil. It was established by *Sant* Bhagwan Das in 1888. He belonged to Bhagat Bhagwania *Bakshish*.<sup>98</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Moti Ram

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<sup>94</sup> Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Sarpan*, p. 159.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p. 160.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, p. 209.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, p. 234; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "The Udasis in past and present: An analysis of twentieth century works", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, 21st session, 1987, pp. 77-82.

<sup>98</sup> Other *Mahants* of this institution were; Bawa Teeka Ram, Tula Ram, Lalmuni, Garib Das, sangat Das, Rura Ram, Surat Ram, Charpat Das, Kusal Das, Ram Saran, Seva Das, Kan

at village Chorari was established by Moti Ram in 1888. In 1923, Seva Das was managing its affairs.<sup>99</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Purnanand, was situated at village Smadhsar, in tehsil Moga of district Ferozepur. It was constructed by Brahm Harsukh in 1825. In 1923 Purnanand was managing its affairs.<sup>100</sup>

Brahmanand refers to seven *Udāsī* establishments in Ludhiana. *Asthan* Bawa Mangal Das at village Dakhan in Ludhiana was related to Bhagat Bhagwania *Bakshish*.<sup>101</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Puran Das at Jagraon in district Ludhiana was related to Mian Sahib *Bakshish*. In 1923, Puran Das was the reigning *Mahant*.<sup>102</sup> This establishment was under *Mahant* Puran Das and it was later on forcefully occupied by the Akalis of Mauja Kasel. The *Udāsīs* were able to get it back through court proceedings. *Asthan Mahant* Harparsad was established by Hamira Das at Heran in 1658. This *Asthan* belonged to Almast *Dhuan*. It, too, was once captured by the Akalis but the *Udāsīs* were able to get it back. In 1923 this *Asthan* was being managed by *Mahant* Harparsad. The establishment existed even before the period of tenth Guru. *Asthan* Mukandpur in district Ludhiana belongs to Sangat Sahib *Bakshish*. In 1923, it was being managed by *Mahant* Niku Das.<sup>103</sup> *Asthan Mahant* Rangi Ram Gujarwal in district Ludhiana was constructed in 1823 by *Mahant* Roor Das. It was connected with Balu Hasna *Dhuan*. In 1923, *Mahant* Rangi Ram was looking after this establishment. *Asthan Mahant* Narain Das Bhaironwal, in district Ludhiana was related to Balu Hasna *Dhuan*. *Mahant* Narain Das was managing its affairs in 1923. *Asthan* Sahnewal Kalan post office in district Ludhiana was

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Das, Sobha Ram, Kaul Das, Bhagwan Das, Brahm Das. Kalyan Das was its Mahant in 1923 :Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 235.

<sup>99</sup> Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Sarpan*, p. 237.

<sup>100</sup> Baba Chintamani, Nandlal Sohna, Mian Sahib, Sant Das, Bawa Ram Shah, Rupa Shah, Gurdial, Brahmharsukh, Brahm Pargat, Bishan Das, Hari Das, Purnanand: *ibid*, 228.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, p. 233.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, p. 217.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, p. 211.

established in 1843 by *Mahant* Sain Das. It was connected with Sangat Sahib *Sachhi Dahri*. In 1923, *Mahant* Sarup Das was looking after it.<sup>104</sup>

Asthan *Mahant* Mangal Das, Dera Baba Nanak in Kartarpur, district Gurdaspur was established by Mangal Das. Baba Hari Das worked hard for the *dera* and his efforts helped in its establishment.<sup>105</sup> *Asthan* Bawa Yati Das, Batala in district Gurdaspur was an old establishment which came into prominence due to the efforts of Yati das in 1923, as such it came to be known after him.<sup>106</sup> Pandit Tara Singh, wrote that Guru Arjun Sahib had met Sri Chand. Guru Hargobind along with his grandson Gurditta, went to meet Sri Chand at village Barath Sahib.<sup>107</sup> Gurditta was given *Seli topi* and decorated with the title of 'Baba'.<sup>108</sup> Gurditta adopted the same attire for Phul Sahib, Gobind Sahib, Balu Hasna and *Almast Dhuan*.

## V

Randhir Singh in his work, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithiya*, published in 1959, has also provided ample information on the *Udāsī* establishments in the Punjab during the British period. He deals with *Udāsī panth* and Guru Nanak and tries to prove Baba Sri Chand and the *Udāsīs* as Sikhs. He also discusses about *Dhuans* and *Bakshishes* and the establishments in detail. Tracing the very beginning of the *Udāsī* Establishments, he informs that Guru Amar Das started the celebration of the Baisakhi festival. The tradition was further continued by Guru Ram Das with the addition to the celebration of Diwali. After the completion of Harmandir Sahib in Ramdaspur, it became the permanent seat of the *Guru*.<sup>109</sup> Soon people from far off places started visiting the city, especially on celebrations, and the

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<sup>104</sup> Brahmanand Udasi, *Guru Udasin Mat Sarpan*, pp. 211,216.

<sup>105</sup> Thakur Das, Bhagwan Das were the successors of Hari Das: *ibid*, pp. 209-210

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, p. 234.

<sup>107</sup> Pandit Tara Singh, *Shri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, Temple Press, Ambala, 1884, p. 174.

<sup>108</sup> Since then he came to be addressed as Baba Gurdita.

<sup>109</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithiya*, p. 126.



place got importance as a business hub. The need was felt to construct buildings to house the visitors and pilgrims and it led to the establishment of many *Dharmsalas*, *Akharas*, *Asthans*, *Gurdwaras*, *Bungas* and *Deras* etc.

Randhir Singh has given the list of about one hundred and twenty three *Udāsī* establishments in the Punjab with thirty nine establishments at Amritsar alone. In other districts their number was found reasonably good. Since the times of the Sikh rule and until the time of British administration, about twenty six *Dharmsalas*, ten *Akharas*, two *Deras* and one *Asthan* developed in Amritsar. In this endeavour, the efforts of *Udāsī Mahant* Prem Das from *Dhuan* of Almast, resulted in the creation of four *dharmsalas* in Amritsar: dharmasala Baba Kalyan Das in *Lunmandi* (presently known as Namak Mandi), Daharmsala Baba Dyal Das, dharmasal Baba Mehr Das and Asthan Sama at Katra Ramarhia near Brahmbuta Akhara in Amritsar.<sup>110</sup> In 1824, *Mahant* Santokh Das established a *dera* in one corner of the Harmandir premises and started *Langar* over there. Later on it came to be known as Brahmbuta Akhara.<sup>111</sup> Another important *Dera* during Khalsa Raj was established by *Sant* Hira Das at village Gandiwind in district Amritsar. During the British times, this *Dera* continued to flourish and later on it was overtaken by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.

*Sant* Hira Das of village Gandiwind established a *Dharmasala* at Lunmandi Amritsar in 1874, where the pilgrims used to come and stay and were served *langar*.<sup>112</sup> The other important *Mahants* of the *Dharmasala* were Sant Das, Nihal Das, and Chetan Das. Antar Das of Balu Hasna *Dhuan* established a *Dharmasala* at Lunmandi in Amritsar which came to be known as *Dharmasala Sangalwali*. Tarlok Das, Basambar Das and Shri Ram Das served as *Mahants* of

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<sup>110</sup> All the above mentioned *Udasi* centres came into existence in 1823 AD through the efforts of *Udasi Mahant* Prem Das during the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithyia*, p.127: The number of establishments mentioned by Randhir Singh in other districts was Lahore (9), Ludhiana (08), Jalandhar (8), Ferozepur (7), Gurdaspur (6), Hoshiarpur (4), Sialkot (3), Jhang (3), Ambala (3), Sheikhpura (2), Karnal (1), Bathinda (3).

<sup>111</sup> Santokh Das also established a new Akhara at Kankhal, in Haridwar, in 1839 AD; *ibid*, p. 389.

<sup>112</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithyia*, p. 131.

the *dharmsal*. In 1897, Baba Kashi Ram of Balu Hasna, established a *Dharmsal* at Amritsar. Babaji stayed here and served *langar* to the visitors and also propagated his religious discourses. After his death a *Samadh* was constructed in his memory. Sarup Das took over the charge of the *Dharmsala*. *Sant* Ashanand Nirban of Balu Hasna established a *Dharmsala* at Amritsar in 1823. *Sant* Ramanand, Sehjanand, Bhagwan Krishnanand, Sadanand, Parmanand, Brahmanand and Mangal Das served this *Dharmsala* till British rule. Baba Sunder Das established Chetan Das *Dharmsala* at Sultanwind gate during Sikh rule. Baba Muthir Shah *Dharmsala* was established by Phul Shahi *sadhus* at Sultanwind Gate Amritsar.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> The detail of the other establishments in Amritsar is: Bhai Khushia Shah, disciple chela of Changar Shah established a *Dharmsal* at Chawalmandi, near Chhati Khuh, Amritsar in 1744. Gurbani was recited in the *Dharmsal*. The *Dharmsal* was managed by different Mahants after Khushia Shah such as Pindi Shah, Jagan Shah, Karele Shah, Tinde Shah, Dharm Shah, Hit Shah, Chit Shah, Jyoti Shah, Peshore Shah, Lahore Shah, Khud Mast Shah till 1923.

Another *Dharmsala* Katra Khajana was established by the followers of Baba Mushtaq Shah, Bhai Brahm Shah and Mohan Shah at Katra Khajana, Amritsar in 1746 AD. The Gurbani was recited, kirtan was performed and *langar* was distributed here regularly. Mohan Shah was succeeded by Dhian Shah, Nain Shah, Bein Shah, hadur Shah, Buland Shah, Khand Shah, Mirjang Shah, Adhin Shah, Mithri Shah, Cheeche Shah, and Narav Shah. Narv Shah continued till 1923 AD.

Bhai Mela Ram established a *Dharmsala* at Mahalla Bakarwana in 1803. It became famous as *Dharmsal* Mela Ram. Bhai Ram Rattan, Bhagat Ram and Amar Das served this till 1923. Charan Das succeeded Amar Das but died after two years.

*Dharmsal* Rattan Hari was established at Lahori Darwaja, Amritsar in 1863. Bhai Anant Das, Salag Ram, and Harnam acted as its *Mahant*. Bhai Surdas established another *Dharmsal* at Katra Garbha Singh at Amritsar in 1923. The guru of Mahant Ram Das came to Amritsar in 1893 and settled at Tellianwali Gali, where he established a *Dharmsal* which soon came to be known as Ram Das *Dharmsal*, after the name of Ram Das who was looking after it in 1923.

Another *Dharmsal* Budh Das was established on Chatiwind Taran Taran road by Budh Das. Bhai Brahm hazoor established a *Dharmsal* in 1814 near the site of Akhara Balanand, which soon became famous as *Dharmsal* Brahm Hazoor. It is related to Akhara Brahm Buta in Amritsar. Mahant Saran Das was looking after it in 1953.

Bhai Sant Das established a *Dharmsal* in 1790 at Ghee Mandi, Amritsar. The toher Mahant of this *Dharmsal* were Gopal Das, Damodar Das, Harbhajan Das, Dyal Das, Gobind Das, Heera Das, harinam Das, and Bishan Dasi (1923). Bhai Brahm Bhara established a *Dharmsal* at Katra Ramgarhia, Amritsar. The *Dharmsal* went into financial trouble when in 1923 Kishan Das sold out half of its property.

Randhir Singh provides the list of ten *Akharas* in Amritsar. *Sant* Ganga Ram Nirban of Balu Hasna *Dhuan*, established a Chitta *Akhara* at the outskirt Darshini Deori in Guru Bazar, Amritsar, during Sikh rule which continued to serve the community even during British rule and developed into a large establishment where many people used to come and stay. A regular *kirtan* was performed in it.<sup>114</sup>

Pritam Das established Akhara Sangalwala in 1781 A.D. at Amritsar. He was succeeded by Brahmni, who was further followed by Nitinand, Parmanand Charan Das, Budh Parkash, Hiranand, *Sant* Das. The *Akhara* served as an important *Udāsi* centre even during the British times and still stands there. In the year 1959 Mahant Amritanand was looking after the *Akhara*.<sup>115</sup> The *Akhara* is situated just opposite a Darbar Sahib. A stairway with a thick iron chain (Sangal) leads to its entrance. The other eight *Akharas* of Amritsar were *Akhara* Brahmbuta, Bibeksar, Ghumanda Das, Nirbansar, Balanand, Kashiwala, Tehl Das, and Chhatewala. The two *deras* were Dera Gandiwind and Dera Gur Arjan Sarhali. The only *Asthan* mentioned was Bagichi Bagta Sahib Bibeksar. Similarly, Randhir Singh provides a large detail about the *Udāsi* institutions existing during the British rule in the Punjab including the areas of Ferozepur, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Lahore, Patiala, etc. He gives details of seven establishments in Ferozpur. At the outskirts of village Dhoorkot Ransingh was a pond named Chundiana, was occupied by the *Naga Sadhus* and as such it

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Brahm Sarbat Dev of Sangalwala Akhara established a Dharmsal at Katra Dal Sigh after purchasing a land from Sardar Charat Singh. After Him Brahm Dev became its Mahant. Mai Surasti succeeded him. Her two sons/chelas, Harnam and Jai Parkash became her successors. As such it came to be known as Mai Surusti di Dharmsal. After Jai Parkash, Prem Parkash succeeded him and was serving till 1959. *Guru Granth* Sahib is recited. During the last phase of Sikh rule in 1843, Baba Sant Das established a *Dharmsal* at Lunmandi Sunareanwali Gali, Amritsar. Jamna Das and Atam Parsad succeeded him. In 1959 Sri Ram was the Mahant. Another *Dharmsal* Mehar Das was founded by Sadhu Rattan Das in Amritsar. Baba Sant Das was looking after it in 1959. Another Dharmsal came up at Majitha in Amritsar by Anghar Dev, follower of Brahm sarbat Dev. In 1959, Hari Das was the serving Mahan, Sujan Das in 1843 established dharm sala at village Kasel, in Tarantaran, District Amritsar: Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithya*, pp. 117-511.

<sup>114</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithya*, p. 164.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 444, 445.

came to be known as Dhoorkot Chundiana. The *Udāsī sadhu* of Balu Hasna *Dhuan* established a *Dera* at this site. It also owned a *Dharmsal* situated inside the tehsil and owned 77 *bighas* and 15 *biswas* of land. The Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee managed this *dera* in 1950's.<sup>116</sup> Kauni was situated at tehsil Muktsar in district Ferozepur. Lot Phattewale Balu hasnia *Sadhus* constructed a *dharmsal* at this place. Gurmukh Das was known *Udāsī Sadhu* of the *dera*, who recited the *Guru Granth Sahib* regularly. He was succeeded by Hari Prasad.<sup>117</sup> Randhir Singh significantly, discusses different changes which had come up in *Udāsī* cult during the early phase of the twentieth century.

Another *Udāsī Dharmsal* was found established at Kabarbachha in Ferozepur by Gurdial of Goind sahib *dhuan*. The *Sadhus* of this *Dharmsal* helped in the propagation of *Udāsī* cult by missionary work and philanthropic activities.<sup>118</sup> A *Dharmsal* had also come up at village Khirkianwala, Muktsar tehsil in Ferozepur. This *dharmsal* was constructed by *Sadhu* Bhagwan Das in 1888. He came and settled in this village much earlier and started preaching the people there. Soon he was able to earn a good name and reputation among the masses. The list of the famous *Sadhs* of this *dharmsal* was Tika Ram, Tula Ram, Lal Muni, Garib Das, Sangat Das, Rooram, Ram Das, Surtram, Charpat Das, Kusal Das, Ram Saran, Seva Das, Kam Das, Subha Ram, Kaul Das, Bawa Bhagwan Das, Brahm Das and Kalyan Das.<sup>119</sup> Baba Hira Lal who was the second disciple of Baba Narain Das,<sup>120</sup> established a *dharm sala* at Kotkapura.

Baba Khem ji had constructed a *dharmsal* at village Chugga in Ferozepur. The people of the surrounding areas used to flock this place and respect him. He also managed *Guru ka Langar* in the *dharmsal*. After the eighth invasion of Ahmed Shah Abdali, *Mahant* Bhai Mali of Sangat Sahibwali

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<sup>116</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithyia*, p. 161

<sup>117</sup> *Loc. Cit.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, p. 179.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 200-201.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 267- 268.

*dharmsal* got martyred fighting the invaders. After his death, the enemy looted the *dharmsal*. The *sadhs* of that *dharmsal* took shelter with Bhai Khemji and requested him to take over that Bhai Sangat Sahibwali *dharmsal*. Bhai Khemji accepted the proposal and after handing over the management of Chugga *dharmsal* to one of his disciple, Bhai Khemji, took away with him a lot of food and other important articles for the rehabilitation of Sangat Sahib Wali *dharmsal*. His disciple was able to manage and look after the Ferozepur *dharmsal*.<sup>121</sup> Chhattiana was an old village in tehsil Chhatiana in Ferozepur. Sufi *Faqir* Ibrahim Bahmi got converted to Sikhism by Guru Gobind Singh. He was named Bhai Ajmer Singh. The disciple of Baba Bankhandi, Har Narain Das's disciple, Baba Har Gian Das of *Udāsī samprada*, established a *dharmsal* at this site.<sup>122</sup> He was succeeded by Atma Das.

Kartaprur is situated near Jalandhar. The centre had got importance during fifth Guru Arjan Dev's period. He established a *dharmsal* over here which came to be known as Tham Sahib. Guru Hargobind came to this place and stayed here for some time. He handed over the management of this place to the *Udāsī sadhus*. Bhai Balu Hasna was given the task to spread the message of Gurbani. Bhai Balu Hasna stayed here for long time. This *Dharmsal* came under the control of the *Udāsīs*. Later on the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee took over the control of this *dharmsal* during Gurdwara reform movement. Under the Gurdwara Act it came under Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee.<sup>123</sup>

Randhir Singh, in his chapter *Bhai Gurbaksh di Shakh* (branch); informs about the development and progress of this branch under Bhai Gurbaksh. Bhai Ji came under the influence of Sangat Sahib and became an *Udāsī Sadh*. One of his disciple's, Bhai Bhomia came to Jandiala Nagar in Jalandhar. His services were recognized even by Shahjahan, who visited the place to meet him. It is said

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<sup>121</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithiya*, pp. 372-373.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 453-454.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, p. 162.

Shahjahan gave him some land, garden and a well, but Bhai Bhumia gave all this to one of his disciples.<sup>124</sup> Bhai Raja Ram succeeded Bhumia and he was succeeded by Sanmukh Das, who constructed a *Burj* in the nagar and soon the recitation of *Granth Sahib* started along with *langar*. Bhai Hari Das succeeded Sanmukh Das as *Mahant* of *Gurdwara* of Jandiala.<sup>125</sup>

The *Mahants* of Dera Magni Ram Patiala established a *Dharmsal* at Jamsher in district Jalandhar. It came to be known as *Wadi Dharmsal*. Gurnarain was its *Mahant* in 1959. The *dharmsal* owns a large chunk of land at different places like; Pind Wahain, Sansarpur, Bhumia wali, Phulriwal, Jandiali, Fry, Raipur, Dosanjh and in Hoshiarpur Mokhlitana, Babalke, and in Ferozpur Langiananawa, and in Ambala at Jagadhri.<sup>126</sup> Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee tried to takeover this *dharmsal* and its property but *Mahant* Gobind Ram was able to thwart their effort in 1929.<sup>127</sup>

Sodal *Dharmsal* is situated near Jalandhar station. Pandit Sachidanand of Ferozpur had come to stay here and he got a *dharmsal* constructed over here.<sup>128</sup>

Sidqi Das *dharmsal* is situated at Banga nagar, tehsil Nawashehr, in Jalandhar. This was constructed by Sidqi Das, the grandson of Mian Sahib. He was the disciple of Sant Das Khudiwala. During Akali Movement, the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee tried to take the control of it. *Mahant* Ram Sharan Das was able to keep it intact.<sup>129</sup> Darshan Das was its *Mahant* in 1959. Khatkarkalan *Dharmsal* was constructed by Nanak Ram. He was disciple of Angarh Dev, who was earlier Guru of Sutte Parkash.<sup>130</sup>

Kartarpur was situated on the right bank of the river Ravi at Shakargarh Tehsil in district Gurdaspur, presently in Pakistan. Guru Nanak Dev after his Parchar Pheri (*Udāsī* tour) came and settled at Kartarpur in 1520's. Chaudhry

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<sup>124</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithyia*, pp. 295-296.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, p. 297.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 447, 448.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, p. 448.

<sup>128</sup> *Loc. cit.*,

<sup>129</sup> *Loc. cit.*,

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 448-449.

Randhawa offered a land for *Dharmsal* and Krori Mal gave land for *sangat* and *langar*. In 1522, Guru Nanak Devji on his return from *Udāsī* tours adopted the family attire; he got a *dharmsal* constructed there. In 1539, he handed over the succession to Guru Angad. In 1784, the city was washed away by the floods and all the earlier buildings were also washed away. Sardar Budh Singh Donda offered a help of rupees two thousand and soon a *dharmsal* was constructed again. The followers of Baba Lal Chand from Balu Hasna *Dhuan* served this *dharmsal* for a long time till it was overtaken by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.<sup>131</sup>

The *sadhus* of Bhagat Bhagwan's lineage established a *Dharmsal* at Achal in Batala in district Gurdasur. The main organiser of this *Dharmsals* were Baba Madhu Sudan Das, Sukha Sahib, Chain Sahib, Raja Ram, Gurdas, Gursaram, Dyal Das, Prem Das, Ganga Ram, Nanak Parkash, Jamuna Das and Jati Das.<sup>132</sup> At Behrampur, the Suthre Shahi *faiqirs* got constructed a well and temple.<sup>133</sup> Suthre Shahi *Sadhus* in memory of Mahboob Shah also got constructed a *Samadh* and temple at Snavri in Gurdaspur.<sup>134</sup> Sahib Ram Kaur's son Sahib Anup Singh constructed a *darbar* at village Chhote Teje, Tehsil Batala, in District Gurdaspur.<sup>135</sup>

In Ludhiana, Randhir Singh mentions about eight *Dharmsalas* and two *Asthans*. He refers to three establishments at Jagroan in Ludhiana, established by Bhai Nika Singh, in village Jalwana,<sup>136</sup> in Bharowal, and Heran. Heran was an old village at Raikot police station, tehsil Jagraon in Ludhiana.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Baba Lala Chand, Ram Das Hazuri, Nand Lal, Parmanand, Sukhanand, Lahori das, Sangat Baksh, Sant Ram, Ram Ditta, Hari Das, Bhagwan Das, Ram Rattan, Manohar Das, Mahant mnagal Das were the *Udasi* mahants who looked after this *dharmsal* from time to time: Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithyia*, p. 163.

<sup>132</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithyia*, p. 199.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 490.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 450.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, Bharowal, p.158, Heran, p. 125, Jalwana, p. 449-453;

*Dharmasala* at Jassowal in tehsil Ludhiana, was constructed by Budhmal to be used as an educational institution and many *zamidars* donated lands for its maintenance Gulab Dass, Diwan Dass and Madho Das remained the *Mahants* during the British Period.<sup>138</sup> A *dharmasala* was constructed in village Sahnewal in Ludhiana.<sup>139</sup> Bhai Sarup Das was its *Mahant* in 1823. He was succeeded by Amar Das. According to the official records, 159 *Bighas*, 8 *Biswas*, and a well existed in its name. Three *Dharmasalas* were constructed in village Mukandpur, which was situated near Police Post Dehlon in Ludhiana. An *Asthan* was situated in Gujarwal and another in Dakhan.<sup>140</sup>

## VI

The detailed discussion of the *Udāsī* establishments given in the accounts of Brahmand Udasin and Randhir Singh discussed above leads to the following conclusions. Brahmanand Udasin wrote his work during the period when the *Udāsīs* were facing an identity crisis and onslaught from the Akalis reformers, whom they considered as usurpers. Brahmanand vehemently and repeatedly tries to prove the non-Sikh identity of the *Udāsīs*. Randhir Singh on the other hand has tried to prove that the *Udāsīs* were the Sikhs as many *Udāsī Mahants* had acted as custodians of the Sikh shrines during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>138</sup> Randhir Singh gives the information that in the following areas land was given to Jassowal Dharmasala by different land lords and Jagirdars :

Jassowal	- 63 Bigha, 17 Biswa, 8 Biswasi
Bahila	- 71 Bigha, 18 Biswa, 18 Biswasi
Kheri	- 33 Bigha, 2 Biswa, 1 Biswasi
Dulon Chhoti	- 25 Bigha, 4 Biswa, 13 Biswasi
Gopalpur	- 1 Bigha, 0 Biswa, 8 Biswasi
Raipur	- 37 Bigha, 4 Biswa, 8 Biswasi
Mansuran	- 2 Bigha, 19 Biswa, 16 Biswasi
Dhandra	- 114 Bigha, 6 Biswa, 2 Biswasi
Rurka	- 59 Bigha, 10 Biswa, 10 Biswasi
Mohi	- 9 Bigha, 0 Biswa, 7 Biswasi
Kular	- 26 Bigha, 10 Biswa, 15 Biswasi

Ropar (Distt-Ambala)- 1 Khet and Dharmsal, *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 406 407.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157, 200.



Brahmanand has pleaded the cause of the *Udāsīs* by giving detailed account of the *Udāsī* establishments especially those which were later on undertaken by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. Brahmanand insists that a *Sadhu* can become *Sadhu* only and in no way he can become a house holder or a Sikh. He gives examples of many *Udāsī Sadhus*, who were never known as Sikhs, but *Udāsīs* only. He writes that the Akalis were using different kinds of yard-sticks to refer to the *Udāsīs* as Sikhs. As per their convenience, at times they considered them as Sikhs and when need not, they referred to them as *Udāsīs*. He cautions *Udāsīs* to remain alert from such critics and be prepared for the coming catastrophe. He supports his argument by referring to the arguments of the European scholars, like Maclagen, Ibbetson and H.A. Rose.<sup>141</sup> Randhir Singh claimed that the main reason for the downfall of the *Udāsīs* was that they had become householders and had distributed the lands among their children, which actually belonged to the institutions.<sup>142</sup> While referring to the occupation of the *Gurdwaras* by *Mahants*, he blames them that they converted religious places into places of worldly pleasures.<sup>143</sup>

Brahmanand also tries to find out the causes responsible for the downfall of the *Udāsīs* as a whole. He puts the entire blame on the Akalis and others, besides the weaknesses of the *Udāsī Mahants*. He writes, “I am sorry to say, that

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<sup>141</sup> Maclagen, “They are almost always celibates, and are sometimes, though not usually congregated in monasteries. They are generally found wondering too, and from their sacred places, such as Amritsar, Dera Nanak, Kartarpur and the like. Their services consist of ringing of a bell, and blare of instrument, and chanting of hymns, and waving of lights before the *Adi-Grant*, and the picture of Baba Nanak.”; Ibbetson writes in his Census Report, “They (*Udasis*) again being founded before the time of Guru Gobind have for the most part returned themselves as Hindus. They are for the most part celibate, and the naked section of Udsis are always so. They practice Hindu rites, wear the Tilak or sect mark, and reject the Granth of Guru Gobind, but revere the Granth of Baba Nanak. They are hardly recognized as Sikhs. They are said to bear high character, and are sometimes collected at monasteries”; H.A.Rose writes, “The *Udasi* tenants though largely tintured with Hindu asceticism found many proselytes among the descendants and followers of the orthodox Gurus.” Brahamand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* pp. 420 - 421.

<sup>142</sup> Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan di Vithyia*, p. 202.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*, p. 576.

the *Udāsīs* are being condemned and considered as a low caste”.<sup>144</sup> The reasons he cited for this development were: the *Udāsīs* had stopped respecting their elders, never bothered to protect their religion (like the Sikhs), and had no feeling for their fellow *Udāsīs*. He writes that the *Udāsīs* were of nationalist character, but with passage of time, had lost interest, and went to deep sleep. This resulted in all condemnation of the *Udāsīs* and their activities. It became the target of criticism in the hands of newly formed *Dal*, though he does not mention it directly, but it points to the Akali Dal.

He further claims that there was a time when the *Udāsī Sadhs* worked hard for the development and spread of Sikhism in time of crisis, but today, they stand condemned by the Akali Dal. Every available source like tracts, pamphlets, newspapers and speeches were utilized to defame the *Udāsīs*.<sup>145</sup> He cites the examples of some of the newspapers who had written much against the *Udāsī Mahants* and its working. Udit Singh, the member of Singh Sabha, had condemned Alakh Ram in his article. He called the great old *Udāsī Sant* Alakh Ram as a corrupt person. Brahmanand writes that if such an old and well known *Udāsī Mahant* could not be spared what to talk of the young *Mahants* who were living in modern buildings.<sup>146</sup> Similarly, Keshavanand was condemned for his discourse delivered at Nankana Sahib in 1910 by the Akali Dal worker, Kartar Singh Lasini.

Keshavanand had argued:

1. All the ten Gurus were the preachers of Sanantan *Dharm*.
2. Guru Tegh bahadur and four Sahibjadas had sacrificed their lives to save Hindus.
3. *Granth Sahib* contains many words from *Vedas* and it is merely a translation of the *Vedas*.

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<sup>144</sup> Brahamand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* p. 451.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, p. 452.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, p. 453.

4. The modern Khalsa, who is trying to convert Muslims into Sikh fold, is against the precepts of Sikhism.
5. Only the members of the four *Varnas* could become Khalsa.
6. All the ten Gurus followed Hindu rituals on junctures from birth to death.
7. The present leaders of the Khalsa lack knowledge to understand Sikhism and intellect to propagate it, that is why they condemn the *Udāsīs*.
8. They are unable to spread the message of Sikhism among masses and are losing hold over them, as compared to the *Udāsīs*.
9. As they could not match them in knowledge and intellect of propagation, they adopted the method of character assassination of the *Udāsī Mahants* to whom the people revered.
10. Even Sikh Gurus supported and paid respect to the *Udāsī Sadhus* but these Khalsas condemned them as they could not understand the Gurus saying in their right perspective.

Kartar Singh Lasini in his reply to Kashvanand's criticism of the Khalsa wrote:

1. How come these *Udāsīs* consider themselves as Nationalists.
2. I will prove that they are responsible for India's miseries.
3. How come these *Sadhus* who feed themselves on Badamrogan (Almond extract) could control their cardinal desires.
4. In the garb of saffron clothes they touch and talk to women, how could they claim to be pure.
5. How could a bachelor living on begging, and leading an idle life serve the society. In no way such a person could compare with an upright Sikh, who lives in a family and supports it with his earnings.
6. *Udāsīs Sadhs* pretend to believe and recite *Granth sahib*, but in reality they follow and preach from *Upnishad*, *Panchadasi*, *Sarag*, and *Vedant* etc.

Brahmand writes that such articles and condemnation poisoned the people against the *Udāsīs*. They also composed songs and prayers condemning the *Udāsīs*. They projected Sri Chand as a disobedient and obtuse son of Nanak. The main reason for this criticism by the Akalis was due to the fact that the *Udāsīs* were having hold over the major Sikh Shrines. In the time of turbulence and turmoil, the *Udāsīs* had managed and looked after these shrines, which resulted in their progress. The successful development and growth of these shrines became the cause of contention between the Sikhs and the *Udāsīs*. Akalis wanted to get back the lost control over them. Brahmanand argues that originally these shrines were situated at the remote places and at desolated areas. It was due to the efforts of the *Udāsī Mahants* that new buildings were constructed at the thickly inhabited areas, resulting in its overall growth and development. *Guru Ka Bagh* Shrine, situated at Ajnala Tehsil, in Amritsar district, was originally situated on a coarse place which was later on developed into a prosperous cite, with a garden pond and a *dera*. Similarly, he attributes the growth of Darbar Sahib to Pritam Das and Santokh Das.<sup>147</sup> Giani Gian Singh<sup>148</sup> in his work informs that every year a fair was held at *Ror Sahib* at *Guru Ka Bagh* near Senhsara village. The *Udāsīs* were responsible for its growth and development. It became the main cause of Akali's envy. All the criticism was responsible for the downfall of the *Udāsīs*. The people started disrespecting and started doubting the intentions of the *sadhus*. The *Udāsīs* failed to unite against this criticism and their laziness resulted in their downfall. The *Mahants* failed to counter the Akali allegations and it encouraged Akalis to launch an extensive offensive against the *Udāsīs*. The *Udāsīs* were forced to flee and leave their shrines to Akalis who occupied them. Nanakana Sahib was also forcefully occupied by them.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Brahamand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* p. 456.

<sup>148</sup> Giani Gian Singh in *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Part-I, 1897, p. 475.

<sup>149</sup> Brahamand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* pp. 460-463.

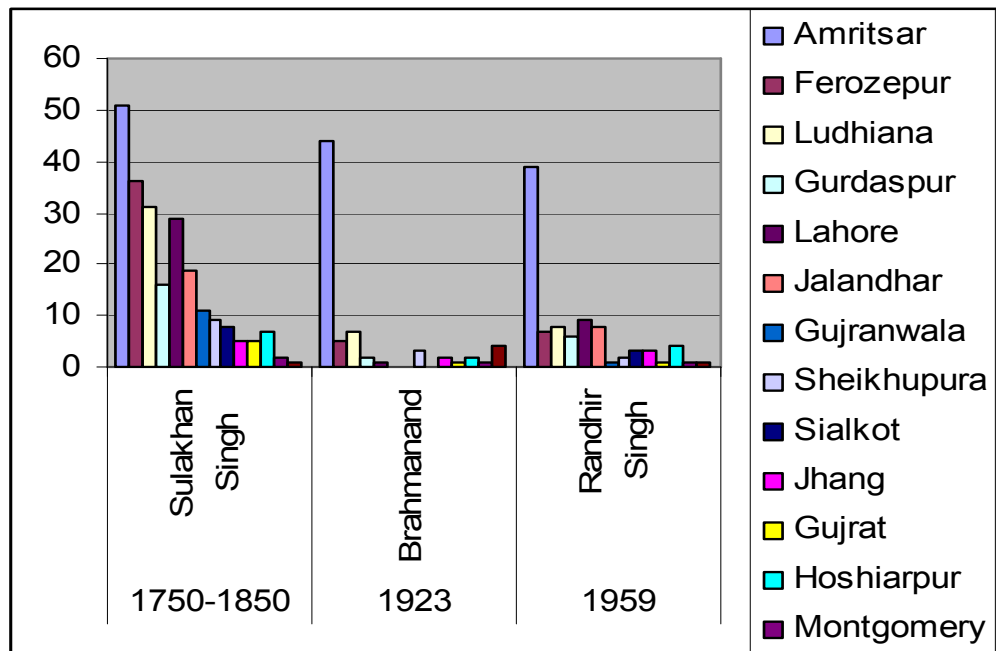
## VII

Before the advent of the British in the Punjab the number of *Udāsī* establishments was two hundred and fifty. In the view of an *Udāsī* writer, Brahmanand, the number of *Udāsī* institutions was about eighty one in 1923. It may be added here that the lists stating the number of *Udāsī* Centres at different periods of *Udāsī* history seem to be highly inflated ones and hence, they need to be used sparingly and judiciously. However, decrease in the number of *Udāsī* Centres may be explained with reference to the partial withdrawal of the *dharmarth* grants of the *Udāsīs* by the new rulers. This proved a major set back to the *Udāsīs* and the number of their establishments in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of the Singh Sabhas and the Gurdwara Reform movement also further affected the position of the *Udāsīs* under the British. The *Udāsī Mahants* had to struggle very hard in order to safeguard their interests. In some cases, the *Udāsīs* assaulted the Akalis, but in the end, they had to give up. Legally, they won a few cases, but they lost many cases in favour of the Akali reformers. All this resulted into substantial decrease in the number of *Udāsī* centres during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1950's, Randhir Singh recorded about one hundred and twenty three *Udāsī* centres which included the Malwa region also.

Moreover, the *Udāsīs* began to assert their status as Hindus. Gradually, they were separated from the Sikhs, through the *Gurdwara* Act of 1925. Even the partition of India, further affected the position of the *Udāsīs*. Many establishments, which were once under the control of the *Udāsī Mahants*, were left in West Punjab (Pakistan).

On the basis of this analysis, and the information available in the works of Sulakhan Singh, Pandit Brahmanand Udasi and Randhir Singh, one can say that the highest concentration of the *Udāsī* establishments even in early 20<sup>th</sup> century was found almost in the same areas or the districts, as it existed during the period of Sikh rule. Moreover, though the number of *Udāsī* centres gradually decreased in those districts, the core area of the *Udāsī* influence, however, remained the same during the different phases of their history under the British. It is quite clear from the given table:

Districts	1750-1850	1923	1959
	Sulakhan Singh	Brahmanand	Randhir Singh
Amritsar	51	44	39
Ferozepur	36	5	7
Ludhiana	31	7	8
Gurdaspur	16	2	6
Lahore	29	1	9
Jalandhar	19	-	8
Gujranwala	11	-	1
Sheikhupura	9	3	2
Sialkot	8	-	3
Jhang	5	2	3
Gujrat	5	1	1
Hoshiarpur	7	2	4
Montgomery	2	1	1
Multan	1	4	1



The table also brings to light some other important facts of the *Udāsi* history. For example, the number of *Udāsi* establishments found in the district of Amritsar constantly remained higher as compared to other districts which suffered in numerical strength. In Ferozepur, their number decreased from thirty six institutions to five in 1923, indicating nearly eighty five percent loss.

Similarly, Ludhiana district registered a loss of seventy seven percent, Lahore almost sixty nine percent, Gurdaspur sixty two percent and Jalandhar fifty eight percent respectively.

## VIII

The *Udāsīs* as a religious group had considerably flourished during the period of Sikh rule. Their pro-establishment stance perhaps enabled them to continue their missionary work even during the troubled times of early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, their acceptance of early Sikh tradition significantly also made them tolerable to the Khalsa. Significantly, the *Akhara* of Santokh Das, was found established in close proximity to the Golden Temple in 1760's. The influence of the *Udāsīs* with the peasantry is evident from some of the donations of land made to them by the *zamindars*. Hence, the *Udāsī* establishments played an important role in the social and cultural life of the people. The religious education was imparted in almost all the major *Udāsī* centres.<sup>150</sup> Separate schools of *Gurmukhi* and Sanskrit schools were found attached with the Akharas of *Mahant* Ghumanda Das and Bala Nand in Amritsar. About six persons were receiving instructions in Sanskrit literature in Akhara Ghumanda Das, about thirty were being taught Sanskrit grammar and poetry at Santokhsar Shivala, attached to Akhara Santokh Das or Brahmbuta Akhara. This feature still continues to exist.

The present *Udāsī* centres have been rendering religious and educational works at their institutions. The reference of Akhara Sangalwala in Amritsar, Bara Akhara at Haridwar, Dera Bahadarpur at Hoshiarpur, Dera Pritam Bhawan at Jalandhar are some of the present *Udāsī* centres providing religious, educational and medical services to the society.<sup>151</sup> On the social front, *Mahant*

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<sup>150</sup> The views were expressed by the Sri Mahant of Bara Akhara Hariharanand, Shankardas, Maheshwar Das, and Raghumuni at Kankhal in Haridwar.

<sup>151</sup> Personal interview with present incumbent Mahant Mahinder Das of Brahmbuta Akhara Amritsar; Mahant Raminder Das Dera Charan Shah Bahadurpur Hoshiarpur; Swami Shantanand of Pritam Bhawan Naya Akhara Jalandhar.

Anantanand is managing Sri Chandra Charitable Dispensary for the poor and the needy and the Sri Chandra Pustkalya and Vachanalya.<sup>152</sup>

In the *Udāsī* Centres, the pupils were imparted knowledge of sacred scriptures of the Hindus and Sikhs, besides some other basic subjects, Arithmetic, multiplication tables and certain works on science and morals. Very rarely, the instructions were imparted in *Lande, Urdu, Persian* and *Arabic*. In this way, the *Udāsīs* contributed in preserving the indigenous education which faded gradually with the introduction of new English education system. Most of the establishments once contained the copy of the *Granth Sahib* as the sacred scripture and many a *Mahants* were well versed in reciting it.

A few important features of the *Udāsī* establishments were: firstly, the most of the *Udāsī* institutions with a few exceptions came into prominence during the period of Sikh rule particularly under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The number of *Udāsī* establishments thus increased considerably in the early nineteenth century. Secondly, the Sikh rulers patronized the *Udāsīs* because of their popularity with the common masses in the cities and the villages. Thirdly, besides the grants from the rulers, many of the *Udāsī* individuals and institutions received donations from the intermediaries and the land owning classes, particularly the peasant proprietors of the Sikh times. Fourthly, majority of the *Udāsī* establishments lost their grants considerably under the British rulers. Whatever grants they got during that period, it was accompanied by many terms and conditions. Lastly, each *Udāsī* establishment by and large, existed independently of the others, under a *Mahant* who had his disciples. Succession to the *gaddi* was decided by the *Mahant*. The State treated each establishment as a separate unit. Very rarely did one *Mahant* manage more than one centre. Some

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<sup>152</sup> The above information was provided by Mahant Anantanand on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 at Sangalwala Akhara, Amritsar. He also informed that he was managing Reki and Blood Donations Camps and donated liberally to the Prime Minister Relief Fund and National Defence Fund in cash and kind. In 1993 he also presented a cheque to Chief Minister Beant Singh and also contributed during Kargil war and Gujrat Earth Quake. During Chinese invasion in 1962, Pakistan invasion in 1965 and 1971 Mahant Narbadanand of the same Akhara had liberally contributed to the country fund.



important *Udāsī* establishments served *Langar*, two meals a day on all week days. They also provided clothes to the poor and needy, attended travellers and pilgrims.

The *Udāsīs* during the period of Sikh struggle against the Mughals and Afghans took control of the *Gurdwaras* and managed their affairs. They looked after the *Gurdwaras* to the best of their capabilities but later on, with the passage of time, they became corrupt and started using the resources of the *Gurdwaras* for their personal use which led to their criticism and opposition by the Sikhs in the early twentieth century. Some *Udāsī Mahants* played an important role as mediators between the public and the Sikh institutions that's why they were able to get land-grants from the Sikh rulers and the British Government. As long as they were honest and sincere to their duties, they were revered by the Sikh people and the British administration as well.

## CHAPTER - III

### STATE PATRONAGE

The rulers had been giving grants to the individuals and institutions, in lieu of their meritorious services, as help to the poor and destitute and above all to the religious institutions. The nature and purpose of revenue-free land grants given during the ancient times, in many ways were similar to the revenue-free grants of the rulers of medieval times. Like their Mughal predecessors, the Sikh rulers alienated revenues from land in favour of individuals and institutions belonging to various Sikh and non-Sikh religious groups. The grants, like service, *inam* and *dharmarth*<sup>1</sup> were frequently given by the state. These grants were accompanied by certain obligations, which included depositing excess revenue to the state exchequer, performing judicial, executive duties and other assignments as a condition to the grant, but the *dharmarth* grant was exempt from any such obligation except social responsibility.

The conferment of a *dharmarth* grant entitled the assignee to receive or collect revenues from the land assigned to him by way of *jagir* without involving any change in existing rights over the land. Therefore, the amount of revenue to be received or collected from the given piece of land was specifically mentioned in the documents relating to such assignment. Any further alienation of revenue by the *Jagirdar* in favour of others could not in theory last longer than his tenure.<sup>2</sup> Besides the state patronage, the religious organizations had been receiving liberal grants from various individuals, *jagirdars*, the local functionaries, and the *zamindars* during the Sikh rule.<sup>3</sup> The Sikh rulers, like their Mughal predecessors, expected all the grantees not only to pray for the welfare

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<sup>1</sup> *Dharmarth*: the land revenue alienated in favour of a religious person or institution as charity, by a ruler.

<sup>2</sup> However, many a *dharmarth* grants made by the *Jagirdar* continued beyond his tenure because of the sentiment of piety attached to such grants: *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, October 15, 1852, No. 116; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, January 14, 1853, Nos. 212-23.

<sup>3</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, January 1853, No. 219, Case 17.

of the state, or their territories, but also to enlist support in matters socio-political.<sup>4</sup>

The *Jagirs* under the Sikh rule may broadly be classified into four categories on the basis of their nature and character. There were *jagirs* of hereditary and non-hereditary nature. The service *jagirs* were of non-hereditary nature, where as *inam*, subsistence and *pattidari jagirs* were of hereditary nature. Lands held on the same basis as the service *jagirs* but not against any office, or with any obligation to the state, may appropriately be termed *in'am jagirs* and they were frequently given by the Sikh rulers by way of reward. Also, there were very large number of holders of *dharmarth* or revenue-free grants.<sup>5</sup> The period from the rise of the Sikh power to the establishment of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, saw the extensive distribution of the *in'am* and *Dharmarth jagirs*.<sup>6</sup>

The terms most commonly used for *dharmarth* grants in the Orders of the Sikh rulers are *mu'af*<sup>7</sup> and *waguzar*<sup>8</sup>. The revenue-free land given as such was termed as '*kharij-az-jama*'<sup>9</sup>, because the revenue due from it to the state was not to go to the government treasury but to the grantee. Other cesses (*rasumat*) were also remitted to him, besides exemption from forced labour (*kar-o-begar*)<sup>10</sup>. Tolls and customs were also remitted sometimes. The payment of what was due to the grantee was sometimes made in kind (*ghalla*).<sup>11</sup>

## I

Individuals<sup>12</sup> and institutions belonging to the Sikh faith received the largest measure of *dharmarth* grants from the Sikh rulers.<sup>13</sup> Over fifty *Udāsī*

<sup>4</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> Naresh Kumari, "Service Jagirs under Sikh Rule, (1765-1849 AD)", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Punjabi University Patiala, 2008, p. 208.

<sup>6</sup> Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, pp. 151-52

<sup>7</sup> *Mu'af*: the land exempt from the payment of land revenue.

<sup>8</sup> *Wa'guzar*: exempt from the payment of land revenue.

<sup>9</sup> *Kharij-az-jama*: exempt from the payment of land revenue; used generally for *dharmarth* grants.

<sup>10</sup> *Begar*: a cess in lieu of unpaid labour.

<sup>11</sup> Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, pp. 151-52.

<sup>12</sup> Individual grantees received grants of a very small value ; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 20 August 1852, No's. 140-141; *ibid*, 13 February 1857, No's. 294-295; *ibid*, 9 January 1857, No's 237-242, 245-250, 253,256.

<sup>13</sup> Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p-156

establishments were large and important in terms of their resources and influence during the Sikh times. About thirty of these institutions, enjoyed revenue-free grants ranging from 1,000 to 9,000 rupees, twenty from 200 to 800 rupees; and over hundred from 10 to 200 rupees. *Brahmbuta Akhara* and *Dera Baba Nanak* received over 18,000 and 12,000 rupees a year respectively.<sup>14</sup> Although no time period was specified for *dharmarth* grants given by the Sikh rulers, the use of the phrase ‘year after year’ and ‘harvest after harvest’ (*sal b’sal, fasl b’fasl*), means that the *dharmarth* grants were given practically in perpetuity.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps they were given for life time as long as they (receiver) remained loyal to the assigned obligation attached to the grants.

The Sikh rulers, from the very beginning confirmed the grants given by the former masters of the territories they occupied. The Khalsa *Darbar* records contain numerous<sup>16</sup> references to *madad-i-mash* grants coming down from olden times (*az qarar-i-qadim*).<sup>17</sup> There are hundred of instances of revenue free grants in the districts of Lahore, Amritsar, Rawalpindi, Ferozepur and Sialkot where the old grants even those by *Lambardars*, *Chaudhris*, *Zamindars*, made mostly to *takias*<sup>18</sup>, *khanqahs*<sup>19</sup>, *sarais*<sup>20</sup>, temples, *dharmsalas*<sup>21</sup> and to the *Udāsī*

<sup>14</sup> Sulakhan Singh, “Non Sikh Patrons of Religious Grantees under Sikh Rule: A Case of the *udasis*.” *Journal of Sikh Studies*. Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 2003 page 90.

<sup>15</sup> ‘The *dharmarth* grantees sometimes gave the part of their land in dowry. In no Case, however did *dharmarth* grants disturb the existing rights over land. The Sikh rulers could and did though very rarely, resume *dharmarth* previously granted’; Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 153.

<sup>16</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 9 January 1857, No. 221-238. this volume contains 433 pages and hundreds of revenue free grants given by the Sikh rulers: *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 15 October 1852, No. 116; *ibid*, 14 January 1853, Nos. 212-223; *ibid*, 10 June 1853, No. 217 confirms nearly 50 names of such rulers including Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia and Hari Singh Bhangi etc.

<sup>17</sup> *Khalsa Darbar Records* Bundle 5, Volume XI, 3-6, 11-12, 15,19,387,557,575, cited in Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p-149.

<sup>18</sup> A dwelling place of a *faqir*.

<sup>19</sup> A religious establishment, generally of the *sufi* recluses.

<sup>20</sup> Resting place for travelers.

<sup>21</sup> Synonymous with *Gurdwara* as a place of Sikh worship; also a resting place for travelers.

*faqirs*<sup>22</sup>, and *brahmans* were allowed to continue undisturbed by the Sikh rulers.<sup>23</sup>

Among the Sikh religious Orders, the *Udāsīs* enjoyed the maximum revenue free grants, next to the *Sodhis* and the *Bedis*.<sup>24</sup> The *Udāsīs* and the majority of their establishments came into prominence due to the liberal grants awarded by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>25</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century, when the Sikhs came to power, the *Udāsīs* grew in social, political and economic sphere, as well as in numbers.

Towards the close of the Sikh rule about seventy percent of the total *Udāsī* establishments enjoyed the state patronage in addition to the grants received from several individuals. The total estimated value of the grants enjoyed by the *Udāsīs* was over two lacs of rupees a year, which constituted about ten percent of the total alienated revenue-free grants. Towards the end of the Sikh rule at Lahore, according to a contemporary estimate, 20 lacs of rupees were given in religious grants.<sup>26</sup> About 200 *Udāsī* centers were enjoying grants worth about 80,000 a year.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Faqir* used generally for a Muslim mendicant but *Udasi faqir* relates to the ascetics or *sant* or *sadh* of the *Udasi* sect.

<sup>23</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* January 9, 1857, Nos. 221-38, 248-283; *Ibid*, March 27, 1857, Nos. 239-40 and 242-43; Also see, J.D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, S.Chand and Co., Delhi, 1981, Appendix xxxviii, p. 385.

<sup>24</sup> Who strictly speaking did not form a religious group: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 47.

<sup>25</sup> He distributed revenue free grants to the *Udasi* and the *Nirmala Sadhs*, the acknowledged missionaries of the Sikh faith. There were twelve or so *Akharas* of *Udasis* in Amritsar which received *jagirs* from Ranjit Singh: M.L. Kachroo, 'The Udasi Sect and Their Archives', *Seminar papers on Baba Sri Chand*, Gobind Sadan, Gadaipur, New Delhi, 1994, p. 62; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "State Patronage to the Udasis under Maharaja Ranjit Singh", (ed. J.S.Grewal and Indu Banga), *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his Times*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980 pp. 103-116; Radha Sharma, "The State and Agrarian Society in the Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Punjab", *Pre-colonial and colonial Punjab*, (ed.), Reeta Grewal and Sheena Pall, Manohar Publications, Delhi, 2005. pp.143-155.; Madanjit Kaur, "The Nature of Jagirdari Land Tenure under Ranjit Singh", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala 1975, pp. 92-101.

<sup>26</sup> J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 385, Appendix- xxxviii; Cunningham has given the revenues of the Punjab as estimated in 1844. The total religious grant held by *Sodhis* was rupees 5,00,000, by *Bedis*, rupees 4,00,000 and by others like *Akalis*, *Faquirs*,

Before the rise of the Sikhs, hardly a dozen *Udāsī* centres were in existence in the districts of Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Shekhupura, Gujranwala, Ferozepur and Jalandhar.<sup>28</sup> Towards the end of eighteenth century, the number of *Udāsī* institutions patronized by the Sikhs, had reached nearly fifty. In the early nineteenth century, under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, their number crossed hundred and by the end of the Sikh rule in Punjab 1849,<sup>29</sup> it had touched two hundred and fifty.<sup>30</sup> Besides, Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Shekhupura, Gujranwala, Ferozepur and Jalandhar these institutions spread to the other districts of Gujarat, Sialkot, Jhang, Ludhiana, Shahpur, Multan, Kangra, and Dera Ismail Khan.

The Sikh rulers alienated much larger share of their revenues in favour of the religious groups than their Mughal predecessors.<sup>31</sup> Extensive and liberal patronage of religious classes by the Sikh rulers was thus an expression of their practical good sense as well as an expression of their sense of piety and catholic outlook.<sup>32</sup> The reason for such benevolence may be attributed to their influence with the people and service rendered by them to the society. It may be added that there are instances when *dharmarth* grant was given in lieu of service

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Brahmins and lands attached to Amritsar etc. stood at rupees 11,00,000 amounting to a total of rupees 20,00,000.

<sup>27</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 55.

<sup>28</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "Political Change, State Patronage and *Udasi* Religious Tradition in Punjab During Nineteenth Century", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala, 1986, p. 217.

<sup>29</sup> In early nineteenth century, under Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors over sixty new *Udasi* establishments came to be patronized: Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 49.

<sup>30</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "Udasi Establishment under Sikh Rule" *JRH*, vol-1, 1980, page-74; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "Political Change, State Patronage and *Udasi* Religious Tradition in Punjab During Nineteenth Century", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala, 1986, pp. 217-218.

<sup>31</sup> Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 167

<sup>32</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* October 15, 1852, No. 116; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* 14, January 1853, Nos. 212-23 also see Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 167.

rendered in the war.<sup>33</sup> As compared to the Mughals and the early Sikh rulers, the *Udāsīs* flourished more during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The Khalsa *Darbar* records bear testimony of individuals and institutions of numerous *dharmarth* grant entries in favour of individual *Udāsīs* and *Udāsī Akharas* including the famous Brahmbuta *Akhara* in Amritsar.<sup>34</sup> The other *Udāsī Akharas* were of Basant Singh in Shri Hargobindpur, Baba Bhagwan Singh in Doda, *Mahant* Atma Ram in Narowal, *Mahant* Budh Das in Sanktara, Har Prashad *Udāsī* of Kuthala, Dera Shah Balawal in Batala and that of Santokh Das *Udāsī* in Gujrat.

About half a dozen of the old *Udāsī* centers received revenue free grants from the Mughal rulers and the Afghan Chiefs of Qasur, before the establishment of Sikh rule.<sup>35</sup> The *Udāsīs* received *dharmarth* grants from non Sikh rulers during the period of Sikh rule. Over half a dozen *Udāsī Mahants* received grants from Rai Kalla, Rai Ilias and Rai Ahmed of Raikot, Allah Yar Khan of Sahiwal and Raja Ranjit Dev of Jammu.<sup>36</sup> Bhai Shiv Karan had received a grant from Rai Kalla, in 1752, for the maintenance of *dharmshala* at Chuharchak in Ferozpur. The grant of 20 acre land worth rupees 17, 11 *anas* and 4 *paisa* continued to be enjoyed by Bhai Rama and *Mahant* Sham Das up to the British times, because the investigation proved that the *dharamshala* was an old establishment and that it contained 2 *pacca* wells for the use of villagers and travelers and 1 well for the irrigation purpose, had built a road, a garden and a

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<sup>33</sup> It may be added that a section entitled *dharmarth* in the pay rolls of the Sikh Government, even recorded the payments to the families of the dead and wounded soldiers to the mother, wife or widow, son or brother: N.K. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, A Mukherjee and Company, Calcutta 1975, p. 158.

<sup>34</sup> Madanjit Kaur, "The Origin of the Udasis: The four Dhunas, Their Activities And Contribution to Indian Society ", *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, Patiala 1971, p. 128-31; Also see, *Khalsa Darbar Records*, bundle 5, Vol. II, 43-46, 89-94, 117-118, 123-124, 145-146, 629-630 as quoted by Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 160.

<sup>35</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 229, Case-2 ; *ibid*, no.240, Case 26; *ibid*, 27 May 1853, no.202, Case 32; *ibid*, 23 June 1854, no-204-205, Case 7 & 13; *ibid*, 27 March 1857, no.245-247, Case-19; *ibid*, 8 April 1859, no 64-66.

<sup>36</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* 16 April 1852, no 49, Cases 3 & 9, *ibid*, 27 May 1853, no. 202, Case 37, *ibid*, 9 January 1957, no.239, Cases 5, 7 & 12.

*dharmshala*.<sup>37</sup> *Mahant* Gurdial received grant from Raja Ranjit Dev of Jammu in 1964 for *langar* at the shrine of Sahib Ram Kaur at kot Naina in Gurdaspur. The grant was confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh against the name of the reigning *Mahant* in 1834 A.D.<sup>38</sup> Baba Santokh Das, alias Tappa received grant worth over 250 rupees a year from Raja Gulab Singh, in 1844 for the maintenance of *akhara* at Gujarat.<sup>39</sup> An old grant given by Muhammad Shah, the emperor of Delhi, to Narain Dass Hazuri, continued to his disciple Hardyal and Hardyal's disciple Raja Ram, of 28 *Ghumaon*, along with a cash allowance of rupees 45 and 8 *annas*. Later on Ahmed Shah increased the grant upto 50 *Ghumaon*, but in 1798 A.D Sardar Dharam Singh, allowed continuation of only 36 *Ghumaons* for the maintenance of *dharmshala* in Nakodar, in Jalandhar, and it continued upto the British Times.<sup>40</sup>

The *akhara* of Baba Santokh Das or Brahmboota *akhara* enjoyed grant of three villages worth 1600 rupees a year in Manawar, from Raja Gulab Singh.<sup>41</sup> Baba Ghamandi Ram, Baba Rao Dev, Sukhram Das, Saran Das, Baba Puran Das and Charan Das also received patronage from non Sikh chiefs for the maintenance of institution in Ferozpur, Ludhiana and Shahpur.<sup>42</sup> Sukha Ram, disciple of Baba Gumandi Ram, got a grant of 6 acre land, worth rupees 63, 2 *annas* and 6 *paisa* for the expenses of *dharmshala* at Chuhar Chak in Ferozpur, from Rai Illias in 1789 A.D and it continued upto the British Times.<sup>43</sup> Ghumandi Das, resident of Moga, got land grant of 5 acres worth rupees 3, 4 *annas* and 6 *paisa*, allotted in 1802 A.D, from Rai Kalla, as *dharamarth* for the maintenance of *dharmshala* at Chuharchak in Ferozpur. It continued under the disciple Sukhram. Brandhrath, the deputy commissioner and settlement officer found

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<sup>37</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 09, January 1857, no. 239 Case 7.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 7, January 1857, No.219 Case 17.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*., 16, April 1852, No.49 Case 9.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*., 13, February 1857, No.295 Case 8.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 7, January 1853, No.219 Case 1.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 16 April 1852, No.49 Case 3, *ibid*, 27 May 1853, no 202 Case-37, *ibid*, 09 January 1857, no.239 Cases 5 & 12.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 239, Case No 5.



through the investigation that the claimant Sukhram, had no record to prove the ownership of *dharmarth* grant but the verification proved that the grant was about fifty years old and that Sukhram spent his time in begging in the neighboring villages and donated all the proceeds of his begging to his followers. He had build 1 *pacca* well, a *dharmshala*, 2 gardens and a pond of water. Thus, the British Commissioner sanctioned the grant to be continued for the maintenance of *dharmshala*.<sup>44</sup> Baba Rao Dev got a *Jagir* from Rai Illias in 1797. It continued under his disciple Deva Das and Tehal Das, comprising of nine acres, worth rupees 5, 12 *annas* and 3 *paisa*, for the maintenance of *Dharmshala* at Maddoke. The British confirmed that the occupancy was held for the past 55 years, and thus it continued.<sup>45</sup> Ganga Ram got 8 acres worth 5 rupees 8 *annas* from Rai Kalla in 1792 A.D, for the maintenance of a *dharmshala* at Chuharchak, in Ferozepur and it continued under his disciple Budh Das. On 16 April 1853, the investigating British Officer remarked that the claimant Budh Dass had no *Sanads*<sup>46</sup> to prove the claim but the local evidences confirmed that the *dharmshala* was being maintained for the past 60 years and that Budh Das had added a garden, a pond and a well to the *dharmshala*. The British Commissioner further ordered the confirmation of the grant till *dharmshala* existed.<sup>47</sup>

The *Udāsī Mahants*, as individuals have been receiving revenue-free land grants from the very beginning of the Sikh rule. Pritam Das *Udāsī* received a revenue free land, among others, from Jhanda Singh Bhangi, Bhag Singh Muraliwala, Amar Singh Bagga, Sahib Singh Bhangi, Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, Ranjit Singh, Kharak Singh, Rani Chand Kaur and Maharaja Dalip Singh.<sup>48</sup> The

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<sup>44</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 239, Case No 15

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 239, Case No 12

<sup>46</sup> *Sanad*: royal ordinance or any deed or grant or certificate. The *Sanads* issued to the grantees clearly indicated the harvest and the year with effect from which they could collect the amount of the revenue assigned. But the tenure for which the grants were given was never specified. Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 49.

<sup>47</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 239, Case No 9

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 7 January, 1853, No.219.

*dharmarth* land of the *Udāsīs* were scattered over all the Doabs.<sup>49</sup> Bishan Dass, Buhai Singh, Sham Dass, Prem Dass, Ram Dass, Sarup Dass, Raja Ram, Narain Das, Sadhu Ram, Bhagwan Dass and Ram Dass got land grants for the maintenance of *Udāsī* establishments in Jalandhar. Where as Puran Dass and Malook Dass got *dharmarth* grants in Amritsar.<sup>50</sup> All these grants were confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and they continued upto the British times.

Bishan Dass disciple of Basti Ram, received a grant for the maintenance of a *dharmshala* at Chougitee in Jalandhar. The grant existed of 19 *Ghumaons* irrigated by one well, estimated value worth rupees 3.25 *paisa* along with the cash allowance of 31.68 rupees, given in 1804 A.D by Sardar Dall Singh.<sup>51</sup> Buhai Singh, son of Barkat Singh, got *dharmarth* Grant of 16 *Ghumaons*, irrigated by one well along with cash a allowance of rupees 43.9 from Sardar Mahal Singh of Alawalpur in 1830 A.D for the support of a Temple at Alawalpur.<sup>52</sup> Sham Dass son of Mast Ram, of Kartarpur, got *dharmarth* grant for the maintenance of a Temple at Kartarpur in Jalandhar comprising of 14 *Ghumaons*, estimated value 1 rupee 35 *paisa* and a cash allowance of 17 rupees 69 *paisa* from Sardar Budh Singh Faizalpuria, in 1807 A.D.<sup>53</sup> Prem Dass son of Parmeshwar Das, got a *jagir*, from *Jagirdar* Mast Gujri ,of 11 *Ghumaons*, 2 rupees 25 *paisa* along with a cash allowance of 15 rupees for the maintenance of *dharmshala* at Alawalpur, in Jalandhar.<sup>54</sup> After Sewa Dass, his disciple Puran Dass and Saroop Dass the disciple of Puran Dass held 10 *Ghumaons* worth 1

<sup>49</sup> *Khalsa Darbar Records*, Bundle 5, Vol. II, pp-1-630, cited by Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 160.

<sup>50</sup> Anand Gauba, *Amritsar (1849-1947): A Study In Urban History*, ABS Publications Jalandhar 1988, p. 30, Fn 168; mentions eighteen *Udasis* who got endowments of grants as *dharmarth* in Amritsar i.e., Sewa Das, Guru Das, Jamna Das, Partap Paharia, Raghu Nath, Mahant Sham Das, Bhagu Bhagat, Ramgir, Mahants Braham Bishar, Balanand, Tehaldas, Brahambuta, Ram Krishan, Mela Ram, Thakurdas, Harbhajan Das, Bawa Amar Das, Chint Das,

<sup>51</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 13, February 1854, No.294 Case 17.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 13, February 1854, No.294, Case 26.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 13, February 1854, No. 294, Case 30.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 13, February 1854, No. 294, Case 44.

rupee 25 *paisa* along with a , cash allowance of 14 rupees from Jaffa Singh for the maintenance of a *Dharmshala* at Kartarpur ,in Jalandhar.<sup>55</sup> Narain Dass son of Mohan Lal, received a grant in 1833 A.D from Sardar Jhanda Singh of Shahkot, comprising of 21 *Ghumaons*, estimated value 1 rupee 20 *paisa* along with the cash allowance of 23 rupees and 26 *paisa*, for the maintenance of *dharmshala* at Shahkot, in Nakodar.<sup>56</sup> Sadhu Ram and Bachee Ram disciples of Tehal Dass got a grant of 18 *Ghumaons*, (8 *ghumaons* to Sadhu Ram and 10 *ghumaons* to Bachee Ram) worth 1 rupee 15 *paisa* and cash allowance 32 rupees 17 *paisa*, from Sardar Dharam Singh and Dhall Singh in 1815 and 1804 A.D for the maintenance of a Temple at Nakodar in Jalandhar..<sup>57</sup> Ram Dass son of Ganga Ram got a grant from Sardar Tara Singh, of 9 *Ghumaons*, estimated value worth 1 rupee 20 *paisa*, irrigated by one well along with cash allowance of 20 rupees for the maintenance of *dharmshala* at Nakodar.<sup>58</sup> Prem Dass got 3 *ghumaons* and 4 *killas*, along with 3 wells, estimated value worth 5 rupees 6 *anna* and 11 *paisa* from Sardar Attar Singh Akali, around 1830, for the maintenance of a *dharmshala* in Talwandi Amritsar.<sup>59</sup> Maluk Dass of Gujranwala got a grant of 4 *ghumaons* worth 8 rupees from Maharaja Ranjit Singh, around 1807 A.D for the maintenance of a *dharmshala* and for the *langar* being served to the travelers at the *dharmshala* in Jandiala, Amritsar.<sup>60</sup> Bhagwan Dass and Ram Dass disciples of Taku Ram and Narain Dass got a *jagir* by Sardar Majja Singh, in 1788, of 250 *ghumaons* worth rupees 3 and 25 *paisa*, for the maintenance of a shrine at Jandusingha, in Jalandhar.<sup>61</sup> All these *dharmarth* grants were not only confirmed by Ranjit Singh rather they continued upto the British times.

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<sup>55</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 13, February 1854, No. 294, Case 52.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 13, February 1854, No. 295, Case 7.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 13, February 1854, No. 295, Case 11.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 13, February 1854, No. 295, Case 21.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 4 March.1859, No. 125, Case 22.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 13 February 1857, No. 288, Case 68.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 13 February 1857, No. 294, Case I.

The *Udāsī* centers mostly large *deras* and *akharas*, which had come up before the establishment of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule enjoyed the largest *dharmarth* grants. The majority of the establishments newly patronized by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors were the *dharmshalas*<sup>62</sup> which enjoyed grants of rather small value, though they constituted more than 70 percent of the total establishments.<sup>63</sup> Majority of these *deras* established during 19<sup>th</sup> century, traced their origins to the past. But a few linked themselves with one or another *Dhuan*<sup>64</sup> whereas majority linked themselves with *bakhshishes*.<sup>65</sup> More than a hundred establishments were found associated with the *bakhshish* of Bai Pheru or Sangat Sahib and about a score of establishments were associated with the *bakhshishes* of Mihan Sahib, Bhagat Bhagwan, Jit Mal and others.<sup>66</sup> Still there existed several other centers which were not affiliated to either a *Dhuan* or a *bakhshish*.

Akhara Santokh Das, popularly known as Akhara Brahmbuta<sup>67</sup> was founded in 1753 and was patronized by Raja Gulab Singh who gave 3 villages worth 16,000 rupees a year in the territory of Manawar for its conservation. Mahant Apbrahm of the Brahmbutta *Akhara*, had received grants from Raja Gulab Singh in villages Kesu, Barouta and Dasour worth rupees 1000, 400 and

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<sup>62</sup> A British settlement officer writing in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century observes that "Dharamsala was a great feature in the Jatt villages of uplands, in charge of an ascetic or Sadh of the *Udasi* or of some other order. It was endowed with a grant of land, either out of the village common or from some private individual..." He further writes that "reputation of these dharamshalas was very great and a few villages were without one."; *Final Report on the Revision of Settlement 1878 -83 of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, T. Gordon Walker, Calcutta 1884, p 60; *Revised Settlement of the Jalandhar District 1860-1866, 1892*, Lahore, p. 53.

<sup>63</sup> *Foreign / Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case I.

<sup>64</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, 68

<sup>65</sup> *Foreign / Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case I

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case I.

<sup>67</sup> Mahant Brahmbuta succeeded to the gaddi of the *Akhara* in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century; Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Sri Amritsar*, page 69. According to Anand Gauba, *Amritsar (1849-1947)*, Akhara Santokh Das was established in 1770s. Mahant Brahmbuta, was very influential person and popular with the citizens. He was at times a member of the municipality pp. 9 Fn. 39, 272.; <http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Udasi>.; <http://indiankanoon.org/doc/1921548/>.

200 respectively.<sup>68</sup> According to Gaini Gian Singh the *Akhara* enjoyed a grant of rupees one lac, seven thousand and seven hundred rupees were given by the Sikh Sardars. After the settlement of the British Government in 1906, during the time of *Mahant* Brahmhari, it was reduced to rupees twelve thousand four sixty five rupees and after his death, it was further reduced to 2,665 rupees and later to 9,800 rupees only. Later on the king of Jammu conferred a *Jagir* worth rupees 905 and Bhup Singh Roparia allotted a well for fifty years in Ambala.<sup>69</sup> Santokh Das had received only 215 rupees a year in late 18<sup>th</sup> century. *Mahant* Apbrahm got grants from Bhangi and Ahluwalia chiefs, but largest share came from Maharaja Ranjit Singh in early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some village *zamindars* donated land to the *Akhara* while, Ranjit Singh and his successors continued their patronage to the successor of *Mahant* Apbrahm.<sup>70</sup> *Mahant* Apbrahm had received *dharmarth* grants from Bhangi Sardars Gurdit Singh, Lehna Singh, Gujjar Singh and Sahib Singh, Sardar Fateh Ahluwalia, Rani Chand Kaur, Sardar Kaur Singh Jung and Sardar Nihal Singh, besides grants from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In the 1840's it had about 200 resident *Sadhus* well versed in the Sikh scriptures, about 70 musicians, provided accommodation and *langar* for poor.<sup>71</sup> Towards the end of the Sikh rule, it was receiving nearly 18,000 rupees a year as *dharmarth* grant and lands worth 5,000 rupees a year were resumed around 1850 and after the death of Brahmhari in 1852 grants worth rupees 3000 were resumed. Grants worth 700 rupees were received by *Mahant* Santokh Das and Brahmhari, rest of the grants were received by *Mahant* Apbrahm during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>72</sup>

After the death of Pritam Das of Sangalwala Akhara, Amritsar in 1787, Brahmrup, Sarup Anand and *Mahant* Sham Das succeeded him.<sup>73</sup> According to

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<sup>68</sup> *Foreign / Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case I.

<sup>69</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 68.

<sup>70</sup> *Foreign / Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219, Case I.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 7 January 1853, No. 219, Case I.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, 7 January 1853, No. 219, Case I.

<sup>73</sup> *Foreign/Political proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 2; according to Gaini Gian Singh the succeeding *Mahant* to Pritam Das were Saddha Nand, Parma Nand, Charn Das

the early British records, all the *Mahants* of this Sangalwala *akhara* enjoyed revenue free lands from the Sikh rulers, getting nearly 3,000 rupees a year towards the end of Sikh rule. The total revenue free grants enjoyed by this *akhara* amounted to 2,920 rupees a year.<sup>74</sup> More than half of the total grants of the establishment were received by *Mahant* Sarab Dial from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He had received grants amounting to 1600 rupees a year in early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>75</sup> Giani Gian Singh holds the view that the *Akhara* had a *Jagir* worth rupees 3600 which was reduced to 2600 rupees along with the income from Devi Mandir worth rupees 200 a year and rupees eleven hundred earned from the rental shop.<sup>76</sup> Besides Brahmbutta Akhara and Sangalwala Akhara there were about 10 more important *akharas* in Amritsar.<sup>77</sup>

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Budh Prakash and Hira Nand; *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, 72; the *Mahant* Anantanand Udasin in Personal interview in January 2007, p.35 in *Nirvam Pritam* gives the list of successive Mahants: Pritam Das (1777-1888) Bk, Brahm Nijroop (1888-1895) Bk, Nityanan (1895-1900) Bk, Parmanand (1900-1927) Bk, Charan Das (1927-1946) Bk, Bindh Prakash (1946-1957) Bk, Hira Nand (1957-1989) Bk Sant Ram (1989-2012) Bk, Amrita Nand (2012-2018) Bk Narvada Nand (2018-2035) Bk, Present incumbent Ananta Nand (2035- till date); Giani Gian Singh opines that *Akhara* was found in 1780's ; *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 72; *Panth Parkash*, 1276-77; *Foreign / Political proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 2, mentions the foundation in 1778 A.D.; <http://news.ukpha.org/2005/01/sangalwala-akhara-a-unique-heritage/>

<sup>74</sup> *Foreign / Political proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 2.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 2

<sup>76</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 2; Also see, Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, pp. 67-76;

<sup>77</sup> Pandit Brahmanand Udasin gives a list of 43 Akharas at Amritsar, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, P.147-161; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "Udasi Establishments in Medieval Amritsar", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1988. pp. 103-112.; Manwinder Singh, Amritsar de Derian the Sarvekhan, pp. 366-369; Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, pp. 67-76; gives the list of 12 Akharas in Amritsar:

Akhara Brahmbuta was originally established in the Precincts of Amritsar ovar. During the operation Blue Star by the Indian Government in 1984, it was almost destroyed. During Galiara plan it was shifted to Pipal wali Gali, Chowk Manna Singh.

Akhara Sangalwala, Bazar Mai Sewan is situated opposite Golden Temple. It is also known as Akhara Pritam Das, and was founded in 1971.

Balanand Akhara Bazar Mochian, was founded in 1775. The founder Balanand was an expert in Sanskrit language so he was conferred *jagir* worth rupees 1380 in Jehlum from Sardar Albel Singh, total *jagir* of this *dera* amounted to rupees 1800.

Mahant Ganga Ram of Chitta Akhara, Bazar Mai Sewan, which was founded in 1789, got a *jagir* from Sikh Sardars for langar. Initially it was worth 3466 rupees, but after death of Nanak Prakash it was reduced to 2589 rupees and them to rupees 502.

Many of the early Sikh rulers besides Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors, gave revenue free lands to *Dera* Baba Nanak establishment, like Sudda Singh of Doda, Natha Singh Shahid, Sultan Singh of Sailkot and Nar Singh of Chamiani. Some important *Jagirdars* like Sardar Mit Singh Padhania, and several Lambardars, also extended patronage or offered *bhet* to this *dera*. It received large patronage under *Mahant* Sant Ram between 1807-1824. Towards the end of Sikh rule, the annual income of the establishment from revenue free grants exceeded 12,000 rupees a year.<sup>78</sup>

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A *Jagir* worth rupees 5520 was in the name of Akhara Tehal Das founded in 1830. After the death of Mahant Brahm Bishesar it was reduced to rupees 1420, and after the death of Dhain Das it was further reduced to rupees 722.; According to Anand Gauba it was established in 1836, p. 9, Fn. 39.

Akhara Nirbansar was founded in 1776 and a *Jagir* worth rupees 2720 stood in its later reduced to rupees 740.

Dera Chatterwala or Pragdas was founded in 1786 and had a *jagiir* of rupees 6757 in its name. It was later reduced to rupees 500. Income from villages was attached to it, such as rupees 1200 from village Bhatto; district Pragdas, rupees 1000 from village Nanak Bari distt. Muradabad; rupees 2000 from village Jahlan, Patiala State; rupees 700 village Khusarpur, distt. Jalandhar; rupees 657 from village Butt, district. Amritsar.

Akhara Ghee Mandi or Kashiwala, Katra Maha Singh founded in 1790 by Mahant Saran Das, had a *jagir* worth rupees 1800 from Ranjit Singh which was later on reduced to rupees 250. It also had income worth rupees 2000 from village Lauliani Tung and Bange.

Navan Akhara Kashiwala at Sultanwind was founded in 1789 and had a *jagir* of rupees 4780 which was reduced to rupees 2200. It also derived income from 4 wells which amounted to rupees 300.

Akhara Bibeksar near *Gurdwara* Bibeksar, Chowk Baba Bhoori, was founded in 1713 and had a *jagir* of rupees 1500 which was reduced to rupees 700.

Akhara Ghumanda Das or Beriwalla founded in 1825 had large *Jagir* in the name of *dera* but was reduced to 1046. It also had income from a well in village Tung. This Akhara has been shifted to Majitha Road, Near the *Gurdwara*; Interview with the present Mahant Gurpartap Singh 27-02-2007.

Akhara Samadhianwala or Panchayati Akhara Bhushanpura was founded in 1923; The works of Lapel H. Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs*, Lahore, 1865 and Giani Gian Singh's *Twarikh Sri Amritsar* are the only two works which give information about a dozen Akharas enjoying revenue free grants in Amritsar.

<sup>78</sup> *Foreign/Political proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28; Also see, Lapel H. Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs*, Lahore 1865, 609; *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, pp. 98-99; according to the final report of the *Revised Settlement of the Gurdaspur District in the Punjab* by Louis W. Dane Esquire, Lahore 1892, p. 59, mentions that *Dera Nanak Darbar* Sahib enjoyed a grant of rupees 2,077 in Qila Natha Singh and Kamalpur in Gurdaspur.

Around 1850, about one fourth of the grant of *Dera* Baba Nanak was resumed.<sup>79</sup> After the death of *Mahant* Bhagwan Das in 1867, grants worth about 3,000 rupees were left with this establishment.<sup>80</sup> Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was enjoying grants worth about 2,000 rupees a year.<sup>81</sup> It maintained resident *sadhs* and provided food and shelter to the visitors. Similarly, the *darbar* of Baba Sri Chand lost revenue-free lands worth rupees 1,000 immediately after the annexation of Punjab by the British and went into further economic loss in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>82</sup> The *samadh* of Ram Kaur at Kot Naina had *jagir* worth rupees 600 a year.<sup>83</sup>

The *Dera* of Tahli Sahib in Gurdaspur enjoyed the grant worth rupees 4,905 a year.<sup>84</sup> The first *Mahant* Sital Das, who died in 1793, enjoyed largest share of total grant from the Sikh rulers and by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. *Mahant* Sital Das had received grants from Sardar Tej Singh Kanhiya, Sardar Sudh Singh Doda, and Mohar Singh Chamari mostly between 1770 and 1780.<sup>85</sup> After the occupation of Punjab by the British there was a steep decline in the grant of Dera Talhi Sahib and it held rupees 989/- in Mauzah, Chachariala in Batala in 1892.<sup>86</sup> The *Jagirdars* like Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia and a few other *Zamindars*, granted lands to this establishment. Almost all the grants were confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors. This *dera* supported about 65 resident *Sadhs*, provided *langar* and accommodation to the visitors.<sup>87</sup> *Mahant* Chuhan Das succeeded Sital Das from 1793-1813. Ram Das remained *Mahant* till 1840. Jamna Das and Raja Ram, disciples of Ram Das faught

<sup>79</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceeding*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28

<sup>80</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p.44; *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p.98-99; *Foreign/ Political proceeding*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28.

<sup>81</sup> The grant mentioned by *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer* is worth 2, 977 rupees a year

<sup>82</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 241 Case 29; *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer*, 1891-92, p. 186.

<sup>83</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 16; *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer*, 1891-92, p.169; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, P.45

<sup>84</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28.

<sup>86</sup> *Revised Settlement of Gurdaspur District* 1892, p. 56.

<sup>87</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28.



for Mahantship and finally Jamna Das with the help of the British got the *gaddi*.<sup>88</sup>

More than half of the grants of Samadh Mihan Sahib<sup>89</sup> between 1809 and 1833 A.D.<sup>90</sup> came from the Sardars, Mal Singh, Buddh Singh Sohianwala, Sahib Singh of Sailkot, Sada Singh, Amir Singh Man and Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa and it enjoyed grants exactly worth, 1340 rupees a year<sup>91</sup>. Several sardars patronized it, besides Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors.<sup>92</sup> Towards the end of Sikh rule, the samadh of Mihan Sahib was receiving over 1,300 rupees from revenue free lands. It provided food and accommodation to 20 *Sadhs* and 5 *brahmans*, besides poor and travellers.<sup>93</sup>

The samadh of Baba Buddha in the district of Amritsar<sup>94</sup> also known as Ram Das ke<sup>95</sup>, from 1816 to 1841 under *Mahant* Charan Das<sup>96</sup> and Brahm Parkash<sup>97</sup> during British times, enjoyed grants worth 500 rupees a year.<sup>98</sup> Besides grants from the Sikh rulers, Mahant Charan Das also received donation from the *zamindars*.<sup>99</sup>

Dera Baba Charan Shah at Bahadurpur in Hoshiarpur district enjoyed revenue free land grants worth rupees 1108 per annum from the Sikh rulers<sup>100</sup>, under Charan Shah, Nanak Shah, Bawa Dhakni Shah and Sri Gurbaksh Shah<sup>101</sup>,

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<sup>88</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 28; *The Revised Settlement of the Gurdaspur District in the Punjab in 1892* by Louis W. Dane, Lahore 1892, page-59.

<sup>89</sup> Mihan Sahib was succeeded by Lakhmi Das who died in 1783 and was succeeded by Prem Das for 30 years from 1783- 1813. Buddh Das remained from 1813 to 1833 and Ram Das from 1831 to 1851, later succeeded by Nirmal and Prem Das.

<sup>90</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 27 May, 1853, No. 202, Case 36.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, 27 May 1853, No. 202, Case 36.

<sup>92</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>93</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>94</sup> *Foreign Political proceedings*, 4 July 1856, No. 152, Case 46.

<sup>95</sup> Giani Gain Singh, *Panth Parkash*, p. 1281.

<sup>96</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 4 July 1858, No. 152, Case 46.

<sup>97</sup> *Loc. cit.*,

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 17.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 4 July 1856, No. 152, 46.

<sup>100</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 19; Brahmand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* p. 90.

<sup>101</sup> Brahmand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan* p-90.

Gurmukh Das, and Gobind Das.<sup>102</sup> But when the British annexed the Punjab in 1849 the number and worth of the land grants decreased considerably.<sup>103</sup> About 300 acres of agricultural land was attached to Dera Bahadurpur. Presently, the *dera* is running a college, a higher secondary and high school at Gardhiwala.<sup>104</sup>

The shrine of Sahib Ram Kaur<sup>105</sup> at Kot Naina in Gurdaspur district was patronized by Sikh rulers and *Jagirdas*. A large *dharmarth* land grant was given by the Kanahiya rulers, notably Jaimal Singh and the *Zamindars* in the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Almost all the grants were confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1834 A.D. *Mahant* Hardial had received grant from Raja Ranjit Dev of Jammu in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Towards the end of Sikh rule, this establishment enjoyed revenue-free grants of exactly, 1675 rupees a year. Around 1850, there lived about 30 *sadhs*, 3 *granthis*, 10 musicians and 5 Brahmans, who were provided food, shelter, besides several attendants' and travellers.<sup>106</sup>

The Sikh rulers<sup>107</sup> patronized the *Udāsīs* because of their popularity with the people and this patronage in turn increased their influence. The *dharmarth* grants of majority of establishments increased both in number and value. Fresh grants were generally added to the old ones given by the rulers. Many of them received donations during the Sikh times from the intermediary and land owning

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<sup>102</sup> *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, 20 December, 1845.

<sup>103</sup> As told by the present Mahant Raminder Das, in a personal interview, on 15.9.2007.

<sup>104</sup> *Hoshiarpur District, Gazetteer* 1980, p. 440.

<sup>105</sup> It is not known when Sahib Kaur died and who succeeded him. Mahant Gurdial of this establishment died in 1781 and was succeeded by Santokh Das for a decade. Ram Das succeeded him 1790 and after his death in the same year was succeeded by Charan Das 1790 to 1850: *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 17.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 291, Case 17.

<sup>107</sup> "The grants of the lands were of course intended for the support of the institution ;and under Sikh rule if a Sadh misbehaved he was at once turned out" *Final Report on the Revision Of Settlement 1878 -83 of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, T.Gordon Walker, Calcutta 1884, p 60.

classes, particularly the peasant – proprietors and the state functionaries like *Chaudharies, Lambardars, Nazims and Kardars*.<sup>108</sup>

Most of the *Udāsī* establishments contained the copy of *Adi-Granth* and the *Mahants* were well versed in its recitation. *Mahants* Mohi Das, Sunder Das and Gurmukh Das enjoyed cash grants for the purpose of reading the *Granth* in their respective institutions.<sup>109</sup> Some got patronage as good rectors of *Adi Granth*.<sup>110</sup> Towards the end of Sikh rule, almost all the *sadhs* found in Akhara Santokh Das and Akhara Kanshiwala in Amritsar city, the *Akhara* at Gujrat and in *Dharamsala* of Mai Nakkain in Sheikhpura district, are referred to in the early British records as the ‘readers of *Granth*’.<sup>111</sup> Towards the close of 19<sup>th</sup> century, some *Mahants* were well known for preparing copies of *Granth Sahib*, and the possibility of similar type of work done during Sikh times cannot be ruled out.<sup>112</sup> Beside Sikh scriptures almost all *Udāsī* establishments contained and even today contain idols and images of Baba Sri Chand, *Shiva* and *Vishnu*. *Sadhs* of Balanand *Akhara* were known as *Shivdoo fakirs*.<sup>113</sup> The *Baolis*<sup>114</sup>, tanks<sup>115</sup>, *katcha* and *pucca* wells and ponds, were attached to some institutions.<sup>116</sup> To

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<sup>108</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 36; Sulakhan Singh, “Political Change, State Patronage and *Udasi* Religious Tradition in Punjab During Nineteenth Century”, *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, p. 218.

<sup>109</sup> Foreign / Political proceedings, 30 April 1852, No. 100, Case 20, 24 32; *ibid*, 27 May 1853. No. 202, Case 37; *Final Report on the Revision Of Settlement 1878 -83 of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, p 60.

<sup>110</sup> *Foreign / Political proceedings, 30 April 1852*, No. 99, Case 11 : *ibid*, 30 April 1852. No. 100 Cases 20, 24, 25, 29, 34; *ibid*, 18 June 1852, No. 184, Case 134.

<sup>111</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 16 April 1852, No. 49 Case 889; *ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Cases 1 & 14; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 40.

<sup>112</sup> *Punjab State Gazetteers (Phulkian States) 1904*, p. 75.

<sup>113</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No. 219, Case 5.

<sup>114</sup> *Baoli* was attached to *Darbar Rohree Sahib*, Guru Nanaksar near Eminabad in Sialkot; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No.241, Case 26.

<sup>115</sup> Large Tanks were attached to the institution of Guru Nanak at Nankana at *Samadh* of Baba Sarup Das at Thaneysar in Lahore; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 21; *ibid*, 23 June 1854, No’s 204-205, Case 7.

<sup>116</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 Jan. 1853, No. 241, Case 26.

some institutions were attached gardens<sup>117</sup> and groves.<sup>118</sup> Almost all the *Udāsī* institutions in Amritsar, Lahore, Shahpur, Jhang, Sialkot, Montgomery and Ludhiana provided *langar* to the inmates and visitors.<sup>119</sup> They also provided accommodation to the travellers, pilgrims and inmates.<sup>120</sup>

During the period between the annexation of Punjab and 1857 revolt, the British administrators and the revenue department collected information regarding the *Dharmarth* land grants and private grants enjoyed by *Udāsīs* besides several other individuals and institutions of different denominations under the Sikh rule. All such documents which dealt with revenue-free lands and were originally in Urdu and Persian were reproduced in English in records of British government. These records in un-published form are lying in National Archives of India, New Delhi.

The British policy towards the religious grants is indicated through the records of British Government,<sup>121</sup> in form of *Settlement reports*, *Financial*

<sup>117</sup> Gardens were attached to Akhara Baba Sant Das, situated outside the Khajoori Darwaza in Batala city; 7 January 1853, No.219, Case 12.

<sup>118</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 219, Case 12.

<sup>119</sup> C. A. Roe, & Purser, *Report on the Revised Land Revenue Settlement of the Montgomery District in the Multan Division of the Punjab*, Lahore 1878, p. 51; *Lahore District Gazetteer 1888-89*, p. 69; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No. 202, Case 30, 32, 33, 37; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 229, Case 2; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 23 June 1854, No's. 204, 205, Case, 1, 7.

<sup>120</sup> The *Udasi* institutions at Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Lahore, Gujranwala and Khangarh were known for this. *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 30 April 1852, No. 100; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 229; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 23 June 1854, Nos. 204, 205; *Amritsar District Gazetteer 1892-93*, p. 42.

<sup>121</sup> "The priestly classes have also every reason to bless their new masters. The Seikh (Sikh) holy places have been respected. The shrines at Dera Nanuk (Nanak) Umritsar (Amritsar) Turun Tarun (Tarn Taran), Anandpoor (Anandpur), retain a large portion of the endowments which a Sikh Government has lavished on them. Liberality has indeed been extended to all religious characters, even to mendicant Faqirs and village ascetics. These people have been allowed by the thousands to retain their petty landed grants on life tenure. There is hardly a village mosque or a rustic temple, or a shaded tomb of which the service is not supported by a few fields of rent free cultivation. These classes, though they will not become extinct, will yet greatly fall below their present numbers when the existing generation shall have passed away. In the meantime they are kept contended, and their indirect influence on the mass of the population is enlisted on the side of the government":

reports, *Foreign/Political*, *Foreign/Secret*, *Home/Political Proceedings*, *District gazetteers* and *Census reports* etc. The religious organizations in Punjab as a whole had accepted the change in administration and sanctified the new rulers. In return the British administration in Punjab accepted the existing religious institutions and even the individual mendicants, *faqirs* and ascetics in entirety and extended the existing fiscal endowments in existence, with partial withdraw and without much change. In many cases where the claimants could not produce the *sanads* of their holdings, were also allowed the continuation by the British on confirmation through local evidences along with a few conditions.

There are many cases of individual *Mahants* and grantees enjoying revenue-free land grants. The British investigating officer, considering the case of, Sarup Singh<sup>122</sup> allowed the continuance of the existing grant mentioning that the *dharmshala* was visited by the Sikhs; the travelers were provided stay and that the grant was an old one. This was another instance where British official recognized the importance of the *dharmshala* and special instructions were issued for its maintenance. In similar case, the Gurdit Singh of Hafizabad was allowed to continue with the old grant.<sup>123</sup> Regarding the case of Dyal Singh, of Jaluka Ludhiana,<sup>124</sup> the investigating officer mentioned that the grantee could not produce sufficient documents to prove the possession of the land, but the *lambardars* and *Patwaris* confirmed about the existence of a *dera* in the past. The investigating officer remarked that the grant was not that old as it was being

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*Selections from the records of the Government of India*, 1851-1852-1853, Foreign Department, N. VI, Punjab Territories, Calcutta 1854, p. 213.

<sup>122</sup> Mahant Sarup Singh, son of Bhai Ditta, age 52, *Udasi* Fakir, resident of Dato Goraya Bagh, Jalandhar got grant from *lambardars* of the village for the maintenance of the *kaccha Dharmshala*. This land 23 Bighas amounting to rupees 23 and remained with Bhai Ditta for 20 years and Sarup Singh for 30 years means for the past 50 years the *kaccha dharmshala* was being maintained; *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 31 Dec. 1858, No. 1080, Case 3.

<sup>123</sup> Gurdit Singh *Udasi*, son of Gurmukh Singh, age 25, resident of *pargana* Hafizabad, zilla Gujranwala got grant from Fateh Singh in 1789 AD and this grant was further made to continue by the British administration: *Ibid* , 18 June, 1852, No. 182, Case 3.

<sup>124</sup> Dyal Singh, son of Syad Singh, *Sadh Udasi* is another Case of holding rent free 16 acres of land. The original granter of this land was Sardar Sikand Singh and it was in possession of both the owners for twenty years each: *Ibid*, 31 Dec. 1858, No. 1080, Case 85.

claimed. He further recommended that grant be given to the holder for the life time.

Amar Das disciple of Prem Das and Bagir Das, got land as grant in 1833 A.D. at village Kale Sadhan, in Gujranwala. The grant was given by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and later on confirmed by Maharaja Dalip Singh in 1843 A.D. The same grant was further sanctioned by the British. The investigating officer mentioned that the grant was not older than 17 years but was recommended and confirmed with the other remaining conditions.<sup>125</sup>

Sangat Das got *dharmarth* grant and *Inam Zamindari* from the village *lambardars* for the maintenance of *pucca dharamsala* at Bhooma in Amritsar district. The *dharmshala* was established somewhere around 1800 A.D. and was being maintained for the past 50 years i.e. 40 years with Sangat and 10 years with Sukhram, his successor. It was further recommended by the British to continue till the *dharmshala* existed.<sup>126</sup> In a similar case Magha, disciple of Nanak Das got rent free holding which was granted 48 years back. It comprised of 20 *Ghumaons*, 1 *Kanal*, 18 *Marlas* or 1 acre, 3 roads, 8 poles in Mausea Shahpur, granted by Sardar Dyal Singh for the support of a *pucca Dharamsala* in Amritsar and further recommended by the British in 1852 A.D.<sup>127</sup>

Bishan Das, disciple of Puran Das, of village Indergarh, Post Office Zeera, District Ferozepur, got 6 acres of land, worth 4 rupees for the maintenance of *dharamsala*; from Sardar Tara Singh, in 1804 A.D. The grant was originally given in 1804 and the British laid the condition that *patwari's* and *lambardars* will make sure about the proper maintenance and utilization of grant for *dharamsala*. The grant would continue as long as the *dharamshala* was

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<sup>125</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 18 June 1852, No. 182, Case 35.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No, 233 Case 4.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No, 233 Case 32 The Cases of Sukhwant and Magha were recommended by Capt. H.R. James officiating secretary to the chief commissioner Punjab in a letter No. 1052 and 844, written 8 Nov. 1856; to administrator esquire secretary to the Govt. of India Foreign Department Lahore 8 Nov. 1856. *Foreign/ Political Proceedings* 9 Jan. 1857, No. 233, Case No. 32.

maintained and the grantee remained loyal to the British.<sup>128</sup> Similarly, *Akhara* of Gian Das in Amritsar, derived rupees 1,022/- from Piro Shah and Bhoman in Batala in 1892, but as the institution was not maintained well, so though the grant continued but a warning was given to the manager.<sup>129</sup>

Tahal Das, disciple of Gooka of village Datah, Pargana Moga, zilla Ferozepur, got in 1787 A.D. 8 acres, worth rupees 3, as a free gift, from the granter S. Tara Singh.<sup>130</sup> The original grantee Manmoh held the occupation of the land for 25 years, Gooka for 30 years and Tehal Das held the occupancy for the past 12 years. Which means occupancy rights were with them for the past 67 years. Bhai Ruldoo, disciple of Gurdhian, of village Bara Bhinder, Pargana zeera, District Ferozepur got 5 acres, worth rupees 4, for the maintenance and expenses of a *Takya*<sup>131</sup>, in village Chota Bhinder, from the village *Zamidars* in 1784 A.D., and it continued up to the British times as the occupancy rights were 70 year old i.e. the original grantee Suhel Das held it for 45 years, Gurdhian for 15 years and Bhai Ruldoo for 10 years.<sup>132</sup>

Atma Ram, son of Mahinder Das, of village Chota Bhinder, pargana zeera, Tehsil Ferozepur, got land holding of 1 acre, estimated value one rupee, from the village *zamindars* in 1783 A.D., for the expenses of *Dharmasala* at Jalooke, in Dharmkot. As the establishment was 70 year old i.e. Mahinder Das the original grantee held the occupancy for 50 years and the present occupant and disciple Atma Ram for the past 20 years, it was further continued by the British till the *dharamsala* existed.<sup>133</sup> Kishan Das, a disciple of Sukhram, got 2

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<sup>128</sup> Letter No. 1050, 843 letter from H.R. James to Edminstone Esquire regarding rent free holding at Dharmkot in Ferozepur. Date 8 Nov. 1856: *Foreign Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 238, Case No 38.

<sup>129</sup> *Revised Settlement of Gurdaspur District* 1892, p. 59.

<sup>130</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 238, Case No 39

<sup>131</sup> *Takya*: a place of repose or the dwelling place of a faquir.

<sup>132</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 238, Case No 16.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 238, Case No 17.

acres, estimated value, 2 rupees, from the *lambardars* of the village in 1812 A.D. for the expenses of *dharamsala* at Fatehgarh in Zeera.<sup>134</sup>

Dharm Das and Karam Das, disciples of Tehal Das, held 21 acres, granted in 1797 A.D for the expenses of *Dharmasala*, at Zeera in Ferozepur.<sup>135</sup> Magnee Ram,<sup>136</sup> disciple of Lakkhi, got recommendation and confirmation of 12 acres, by the British in 1857, for the *dharmarth* grant worth rupees 6 and 15 *paisa*. It was originally granted in 1752 A.D. for the maintenance of a *dharamsala* and a pond at Chuharchak, Moga. Gursharan Das, son of Budh Das, got further confirmation of a *dharmarth* grant originally granted in 1843 A.D. for maintaining a *dharmasala* at Zeera in Ferozpur.<sup>137</sup> Hameer Shah, son of Chandan Shah, got a grant in 1830's, for maintaining a *Takya* meant for the travellers at Rodewalla in Zeera, of 1 acre, worth rupees 3 and 11 anaas.<sup>138</sup> Bhoop Singh, son of Gurdit Singh and disciple of Gulab Das, got 2 acres grant worth 1 rupee, in 1803 A.D for a *dharmasala* in Ferozpur.<sup>139</sup> Auree Das, son of Bhagat Ram, got a *dharmarth* in 1813 A.D of 3 acres, worth rupees 3 and 4 *paisa* from Sukhram, for a *dharmasala* at Sudda Singh in Ferozpur.<sup>140</sup> Ram Parkash, disciple of Jaiparkash, got *dharmarth* for *dharmasala* at Sudda Singh in Ferozpur, in 1772 A.D, of 7 acres , worth rupees 3 and 8 *paisa*.<sup>141</sup>

Nandram, disciple of Moti Ram Guru, got a grant in 1812 A.D, of 4 acres worth rupees 2 and 2 *paisa*, for the *langar* being served at *dharmasala* Sudda Singh in Ferozpur.<sup>142</sup> Kale Shah son of Mehtab Shah, held a grant for a *Takya* at Zeera in Ferozepur, in 1842 A.D of 1 acre worth rupees 1 from the *Zamindars* of

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<sup>134</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 238, Case No 55.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 239, Case No 4.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 239, Case No 11.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 240, Case No 1.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 240, Case No 8.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 240, Case No 23.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 241, Case No 31.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 241, Case No. 29.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 241, Case No. 44.



the village. It was continued further by the British.<sup>143</sup> Ram Das and Maluk Das, disciples of Guru Ganpat Das, got a grant in 1842 A.D, from Sardar Mahal Singh Ahluwalia for the maintenance of *dharmasala* at Zeera in Ferozepur of 2 acres worth rupees 1, 7 *annas* and 2 *paisa*. The British allowed the continuance of the grant though the claimants could not produce the *sanads*.<sup>144</sup> Hariya Das, son of Khushal Das, got a grant from Raja Fateh Singh Ahluwalia in 1812 A.D. of 15 acres worth rupees 8 , for a *dharmasala* at zeera in Ferozepur<sup>145</sup>

Gulab Das, disciple of Sangat Shah, resident of village Khosa Kotla, Zeera, Zilla Ferozepur, got a grant in 1812 A.D, from Raja Fateh Singh Ahluwalia for the maintenance of a *dharmasala* at Dalewal, of 4 acres worth 2 rupees.<sup>146</sup> Babu Sukhchain, son of Kishan Das, got a grant in 1820 A.D, of 6 acres worth rupees 4 for a *dharmasala* at Khosa Kotla in Zeera, Ferozpur<sup>147</sup> Moan Das, disciple of Surmukh Das got land from Rai Ahmad of Raikot around 1784 A.D, of 10 *Bighas* and 14 *Biswas*, for a *dharmasala* at Akalgarh, Ludhiana. The *dharmasala* existed for the past 73 years and was continued by the British in 1857 A.D on the condition of good behaviour and loyalty of the occupant towards the British.<sup>148</sup> Gulab Das, Bhagwan Das, disciples of Jeeto Ram and Gurain Das, got grant from Rai Ahmad of Raikot, in 1803 A.D for the maintenance of a *dharmasala* at Akalgarh, Ludhiana, of 33 *Bighas* and 16 *biswas*.<sup>149</sup> Bram Dev, disciple of Kishan, is yet another similar case.<sup>150</sup>

The religious grants were given to the mosques, temples and tombs, without any bias towards any particular sect. The priestly class in general and *Udāsīs* in particular received the benevolent donations from the Government. Puran Das, disciple of Jugraj, village Julowalee, Pargana Khanna, *zila*

<sup>143</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 241, Case 13.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 241, Case 12.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 241, Case 7.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 245, Case 10.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 245, Case 19.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 253, Case 7.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 253, Case 9.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, 9 Jan. 1857, No. 256, Case 6.

Ludhiana, held *dharamarth* of 27 *bighas* and 7 *Biswas* irrigated by one *Pucca* well, the estimated value rupees 36 granted by the village *lambardars* and *Zamindars* around 1798 A.D. The original guarantee of the *jagir*, Mohar Das, held it for 15 years, Jugraj continued for next 25 years and Puran Das for another 20 years.<sup>151</sup> The investigating officer A. Denison on 1 February 1853 recorded that he personally visited the grant of Puran Das. He informs that it had been held by three successive persons for the past 60 years and that *Dharmasala* was well maintained and the *faqirs* were fed regularly. He recommended 51 *Bighas* to be given as grant. In this case we find that the original grant was of 27 *Bighas* but was raised to 51 on the recommendation of investigating officer. G.B. Burns, the commissioner confirmed the recommendation and it was endorsed by John Lawrence.<sup>152</sup> *Udāsī Mahant* of Naina Kot received rupees 614/- from Ghanwal Sogian in Shakargarh in 1892.<sup>153</sup>

The British settlement officer of the Montgomery District noticed that “*Udāsī Fakirs* own several fine villages in the west of Dipalpur tehsil. Among them is Bhuman Shah at which there is a shrine of a saint of that name and where food is distributed gratuitously. This is supported partly by proceeds of the *jagirs* enjoyed by the incumbent of the shrine and partly by the contributions of the *Kambohs*, who look upon Bhuman Shah as their patron who lived from 1687-1756 A.D.”<sup>154</sup> Jassowal was another famous alms house which amounted to several hundred acres. During the land settlement period the *mahants* of Jassowal *dharmasala* were Gulab Dass, Diwan Dass and Madho Das. The financial commissioner’s: Letter No-306, dt. 15 February, 1854 mentioned revenue-free grant in the name of *Gulabdas* at Bahila village for running the *langar* and school in the *dharamsala*. The same letter also refers to land

<sup>151</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 31<sup>st</sup> of Dec. 1858, No. 1078, Case I.

<sup>152</sup> A. Denison visited on 1<sup>st</sup> February. 1853 and G.B. Burnes signed on 31<sup>st</sup> April 1853 and finally recommended by chief commissioner on 14 July 1857: *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 31<sup>st</sup> of Dec. 1858, No. 1078, Case I.

<sup>153</sup> *Revised Settlement of Gurdaspur District* 1892, p. 59.

<sup>154</sup> *Revised land Revenue Settlement of the Montgomery District of the Mooltan Division of the Punjab*, C.A. Roe and W.E. Purser B.C.S, Lahore 1878. p 51.

allotment in Dhandra village in the name of Madho Das disciple of Diwan Das, for the recitation of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Letter no-124, dated 26, January 1857 mentions allotment at Raipur village. Letter no.144 dated 29 January 1857 refers to land allotment at Mohi in the name of Madho Das. The letters substantiate that *mahants* were given the confirmation of these lands to be continued on the condition of good character and loyalty of the *Mahant* towards the British.<sup>155</sup> *Dharamsala* Bhai Ram Das at village Sayidwala in Shekupura district, Pakistan and *dharamsala* Muzang, Lahore or also known as *dharamsala* Bhai Ram Das at Lahore also got revenue free lands : 339 *kanal* and 5 *marlas* at village Sayidwala ; 144 *kanal* in the same village in the name of Paramanand Singh son of Het Ram *Sadh Udāsī* Khalsa Nanak Paadri; land revenue of 572 *kanal* 7 *marlas* at village Malka Haji according to letter of secretary government Punjab no. 61 dated 13<sup>th</sup> April 1886 and financial commissioner's letter no. 228 dated 16 April 1886 for the maintenance of both the *dharamsalas* on the condition of good conduct of the organizers; revenue free land according to the letters referred above was also allotted in village Joya no. 294 , 64 *kanal* and 15 *marla* . The lands were further confirmed during the settlement period in year 1926 according to the letter dated 19 march 1926.<sup>156</sup>

A large *langar* was held at Jaspal Bangar near Ludhiana. The first endowment was during the time of Emperor Muhammad Shah and later on the successors added till it grew to about 800 acres. Heren in Jagraon Tehsil though endowments were not so large but it was a famous *langar* house.<sup>157</sup> The result of such policy towards the religious individuals and organizations helped the new

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<sup>155</sup> Jassowal- 63 Bigha, 17 Biswa, 8 Biswasi; Bahila- 71 Bigha, 18 Biswa, 18 Biswasi; Kheri - 33 Bigha, 2 Biswa, 1 Biswasi; Dulon Chhoti -25 Bigha, 4 Biswa, 13 Biswasi ; Gopalpur- 1 Bigha, 0 Biswa, 8 Biswasi; Raipur- 37 Bigha, 4 Biswa, 8 Biswasi; Mansuran - 2 Bigha, 19 Biswa, 16 Biswasi; Dhandra- 114 Bigha, 6 Biswa, 2 Biswasi; Rurka- 59 Bigha, 10 Biswa, 10 Biswasi; Mohi- 9 Bigha, 0 Biswa, 7 Biswasi; Kular- 26 Bigha, 10 Biswa, 15 Biswasi; Ropar (Distt-Ambala)- 1 Khet and Dharmsal,;Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikha Di Vithiya*, pp. 159-160.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*, pp.201-202.

<sup>157</sup> *Final Report on the Revision of Settlement 1878 -83 of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, pp. 60-61;

government to win the sympathy of the masses which was in direct contact with the priestly class and such institutions. This alliance between the new government and the religious groups did not last long and drop in the grant was noticed. The gradual loss of patronage resulted in the decrease of *Udāsī* institutions and in retrospect its influence on its masses. The *Udāsī* establishments suffered in terms of patronage a serious set back after the fall of Sikh rule in 1849. During Sikh times the total grants enjoyed by *Dera-i-kalan* of Phai Pheru was rupees 6, 500. Out of which lands worth over 200 rupees a year were resumed in 1850's. *Mahant* Dhian Das of the *dera* was asked to pay fourth of the total revenue left to the establishment in grant. After his death, the grants were further curtailed. The case of grants of this *dera* was treated with indulgence by the British on account of the good conduct of *Mahant* Dhian Das and the members of establishment during Anglo-Sikh war<sup>158</sup> out of the total grant of 18,000 rupees a year enjoyed by the *Akhara* of Baba Santokh Das during Sikh times, lands worth over 5,000 rupees a year were resumed around 1850. After the death of *Mahant* Brahmhari in 1852, grant worth over 3,000 rupees were resumed<sup>159</sup> and by the end of nineteenth century *Akhara* Santokh Das had a grant of only seven thousand rupees a year. Another example of *Darbar* Baba Sri Chand lost lands worth 1,000 rupees after annexation by the British.<sup>160</sup>

Nihal Das, son of Mansa Ram, of village Kallan, Pargana Bharatgarh, *zila* Ludhiana held a *dharamarth* of 680 *bighas* irrigated by three *pucca* wells.<sup>161</sup> The name of the original grantor and the period is not known but was confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The investigating officer A. Denison, in order to verify the authenticity of the grant personally visited the site in 1855 because the village *zamindars* had complained against the grant that it was too large. On

<sup>158</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No. 202, Case 32.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid*, 7 Jan. 1853, No. 218, Case 1; Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy*, p.44; Gaini Gian Singh, *Twarikh Sri Amritsar*, p. 68

<sup>160</sup> *Amritsar District Gazetteer*, 1883-1884, p. 53.

<sup>161</sup> *The Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1858 No. 1078, Case 5.

taking note of this complaint 400 *bighas* were deducted and 280 were left and confirmed as grant. He further observed personally and recorded that *Dharmasala* was actually a large place where 400 *faqirs* and many people visited daily to pray. *Granthis* recited the *Granth* and *langar* was also served. The above note is important from two angles, i.e. the *Dharmasala* was in existence before the time of Ranjit Singh. Though the name of original granter and the period of grant is unknown but was confirmed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1825 A.D. Secondly, the British government reduced it and confirmed the grant till the grantee maintained it properly. The document is signed by commissioner G.B. Burns and is endorsed by Chief Commissioner John Lawrence. Kachee Ram<sup>162</sup> of village Dhera of Khanna *zilla* in Ludhiana had a holding of one *pucca* well and a *jagir* of 42 *Bighas*, amounting to the total value of 37 rupees, 6 *annas* and 9 *paisa*, granted by Raja Ranjit Singh of Nabha in 1761 A.D. for the upkeep and distribution of *langar* to the visitors at *dharamsala* in Ludhiana. It was held by three different persons before it went to the present holder Kachee Ram in 1853.<sup>163</sup> After completing the enquiry the British investigating Officer, recorded “Half the land including the well be upheld in perpetuity and the other half resumed as the expenses were not much.” The grant was granted for the life time of the incumbent and 25 *bighas* were to be given to the successor of Kachee Ram, which means the British Government reduced 17 *bighas* out of 42 *bighas* of land.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1858, No. 1079, Case No.5.

<sup>163</sup> Balanand held this *jagir* for 25 years and after him his successor Kachee Ram was the holder for the past 10 years.

<sup>164</sup> The remarks of the investigating officer, ‘On enquiry it passes that the land has been granted to the Manfeedar for the expenses of *langar* and *dharamsala*, but as the *Udasi* are not so much, I want to recommend that half the land including the well be upheld in perpetuity and the other half returned as it was signed by settlement officers. Then view of grants commissioner followed like this, “The whole for the life of the present Manfeedar, after his death 25 Bighas besides the well for the term of settlement for the *dharamsala* expenses, after which further orders will be issued”: *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 31 Dec. 1858, No. 1079, Case 5.

## II

It was perhaps because of the simple living standards and the social service being rendered by the *Udāsīs* that they were mistaken as beggars. The problem of identity arose and many petitions were filed by the *Udāsī Mahants* that the *Udāsīs* should be recorded as *Sadhs* and not as beggars. The Census Commissioner issued orders to inform all the petitioners that the matter was considered seriously and in the coming Census of 1931, the *Udāsīs* would be considered as *Sadhs* and not as beggars.<sup>165</sup>

A large number of revenue-free grants were given to the *Udāsīs* during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but in 1935 they were enjoying only six such grants.<sup>166</sup> The *Udāsīs* remained important after the end of the Sikh rule in 1849. In 1881, seventy percent of the *Udāsīs* still belonged to the area covered by the British Punjab and their numerical strength was larger than that of any religious group among the Sikhs, being over 16,000 as against about 2000 of Nirmalas.<sup>167</sup>

The influence of the Singh Sabha and Arya Samaj was detrimental to the popularity of the *Udāsīs*. The situation changed in early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the successful struggle of the Akalis for the *Gurduwara* reform which dealt a severe blow to the prestige and position of the *Udāsī Mahants* because the Sikhs had started the move to capture the *Gurdwaras* and *Deras*. The *Udāsīs* who had claimed themselves to be Sikhs and registered so in the census records<sup>168</sup> filed petitions that they should now be considered as Hindus in forthcoming Census of 1931,<sup>169</sup> otherwise, they would boycott the coming Census of 1931.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Home/Public Deptt. F/45/47/30 pub dt.28, Nov.1930.

<sup>166</sup> Anand Gauba, *Amritsar (1849-1947): A Study In Urban History*, pp 272-273

<sup>167</sup> Sulakhan Singh, 'The *Udasis* in the Early 19th Century', *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. II, 1989, p-41.

<sup>168</sup> Anand Gauba, *Amritsar (1849-1947): A Study In Urban History*, pp 272 fn 90.

<sup>169</sup> *Census of Punjab 1881*, Vol. II Appendix-A; See, Home/Public Department, File no. 45/47/30 : A letter by *Mahant* Darshan Das dated 15 November 1930, from village Maniary, Post Office, Silout District Muzaffarpur, Bihar mentioned "the religious views

### III

The Majority of the *Udāsī* establishments lost nearly twenty five percent of their grants in the 1850's and suffered further losses on the death of the reigning *Mahant* in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There was hardly any increase in the *Udāsī* centers under the British after 1849. A change was seen in the position of the *Mahants* in the second half of the nineteenth century. The *Mahants* who had been just the custodians of the *Udāsī* establishments, started claiming themselves as the owners. The British rulers followed a general policy to discourage the *Dharmarth* grants afterwards.<sup>171</sup> No fresh revenue free grants were issued to the *Udāsīs* or the other priestly classes. At the time of land-revenue settlements by the British, the *Udāsī Mahants* were made the owners of the property and the land attached with their *Udāsī* institutions. The result was that many establishments were turned into private houses and were closed to the public.<sup>172</sup> The *Udāsī Mahants* naturally had the official backing of the British administrators as the tried vested interests.<sup>173</sup> British settlement officer of Ludhiana mentioned that "At the regular settlement, the incumbent was in every case returned as owner of land which was at the same time exempted

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and beliefs of *Udāsīs* are quite opposed to those of Sikhs. The *Udāsīs* are peace loving and God fearing people and delight in religion while the Sikhs are warlike, military race and given to worldly pleasures. The main object of their life being to rule over the world for the protection of their own interest. Thus, there being so vast a difference in religion: the one being diametrically opposed to the other. It is a great wonder that the authorities are mistaking the *Udāsīs* for the Sikhs....."

<sup>170</sup> Home/Public Department, File no. 45/47/30;

<sup>171</sup> *General Report on the Administration of the Punjab Territories for the years 1851 -1852 and 1852-1853*, Selections from the record of the Government (Foreign Department) No. VI (Calcutta 1854), p. 213.

<sup>172</sup> *Final Report on the Revision Of Settlement 1878 -83 of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, T. Gordon Walker, Calcutta 1884, p. 60.

<sup>173</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p.45

from revenue for the period of settlement.”<sup>174</sup> Thus, we find that in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the position of the *Udāsīs* was much weaker than in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. But it was stabilized on the eve of Gurudwara Reform Movement.

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<sup>174</sup> *Final Report on the Revision of Settlement 1878-83 of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, p 60; *Ludhiana District Gazetteer 1888 -1889*, p. 72.



## CHAPTER-IV

### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The *Udāsī* establishments or centres were known by various names, like *akhara*, *deras*, *gurdwaras*, *asthans*, *temples*, *samadhs* and *dharmshalas*, and the distinctions of nomenclature probably implied some minor or major distinction of origin, character or function. These centres were the offshoots of one or the other important organization of the *Udāsīs*, known as *Dhuan* or *Bakshishes*. Besides this common link, these centres had no other obligation or relation with the parental organization in matter of internal management and functioning of the establishment. There were centres which were established by influential *Udāsī Mahants* belonging to either a *Dhuan* or a *Bakshish* of the *Udāsī* sect. The centres varied in size, some were small and others were large, varying accordingly. They were known either after the name of their founder or by the name of the location and some for its peculiar features as Sangalwala Akhara at Amritsar got its name due to the use of *Sangal* at its entrance. There were also centres which did not claim their affiliation with any Order of the *Udāsīs*.

#### I

The *Akhara* was the largest organization of the *Udāsī* sect. There was no fixed size for the establishment. The *Samadh* was generally a place where a memorial had been constructed in sacred memory of the *Sadh*, *Mahant* or *Sant* related to the *Udāsī* order.<sup>1</sup> *Gurudwaras*, associated with the life of the Sikh gurus, were often taken over by *Udāsī Mahant* or actually got constructed by them. Some of these were also known as *Darbars*.<sup>2</sup> In the country side, the establishment called *dharamsal* served secular as well as religious purposes and hence its popularity with people of the village.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Samadh*, a memorial raised on the place of cremation, generally for persons prominent in one sphere or another: Indu Banga *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Synonymous with *Gurdwara* as a place of Sikh worship; also a resting place for travellers: Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 198.

<sup>3</sup> Sulakhan Singh, 'The *Udasis* in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. II, 1981, pp. 35-36.

Every *Udāsī* centre had its own *Mahant* with its *chelas*, *gurbhais* and other *sadhs* and attendants including musicians, *granthis*, cooks, and the menials. They all had the different modes of running the centre. As it may be expected the number of the *chela* of a *Mahant* and other inmates of the centre varied widely from one centre to another due to variation in the sources. The *Mahant* was the chief organizer of all the religious, financial, and administrative affairs.<sup>4</sup>

Every centre bustled with activity around its *Mahant*, who was its main sole and spirit. Besides *chelas*, *gurbhais*, *sadhs*, and other attendants, all remained attached to the centre. The more the numbers, better the prospects. The number indicated the prosperity of the establishment and organization of the *Mahant*. The *Mahant* as the sole authority of the establishment had the power to nominate his successor. As it was up to the *Mahant* to nominate his successor, they adopted different patterns to nominate their successor. In most of the cases, it was kept a secret and the nomination was disclosed and declared at the last moment of *Mahant's* life. This always prompted others to serve their master in right earnest way in order to win his favour. It was also a move on the part of the *Mahant* to get dedication and service from the staff. He could choose one either from his *chelas* or from any other member of the centre to whom he considered appropriate for the guru *gaddi*.

In case of a dispute a *panchayat* formed by other *Mahants* did intervene in the matter. The senior most *chela* genuinely succeeded to the *gaddi* of the *Mahant* though there are instances of *gurbhai* succeeding to the *gaddi*.<sup>5</sup> On enquiry about the selection and appointment of the *chela* as *Mahant* of the *deras*, it was informed by Swami Anand Raghav that the appointment and selection of the successor totally lay in the hand of the *deras* in-charge.<sup>6</sup> Swami Ganesh Das also confirmed the same procedure as far as the selection of the successor was concerned.<sup>7</sup> On enquiry, whether he has so far nominated his successor or not, he said 'I am yet to find one. Those, whom I had selected, left the *Ashram* for materialistic pursuits. As such I am still looking for some competent person to succeed me'.<sup>8</sup> He further told that *Panchaiti Akhara, Bara*, had nothing to do with the internal affairs of the *Ashram*. The same

<sup>4</sup> The *Mahant*, as the sole authority of the establishment had the power to nominate his successor. He could choose one either from the *chelas* or any other member of the centre he considers appropriate for the succession.

<sup>5</sup> Sulakhan Singh "The Udasis in the Early Nineteenth Century", *Journal of Regional History*, p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> *Mahant* of Muni Mandal Ashram Holi Chowk Knakhal, Haridwar, on 23-12-2008.

<sup>7</sup> Sadhu Bela Ashram, Atithyam Sapt Sarovar, opposite Dudadhari Chowk, Haridwar, 25-12-2008.

<sup>8</sup> As told by Mahant Ganesh Das of Sadhu Bela Ashram on 25-12-2008.

view about the scarcity of competent *chela* that could succeed him was expressed by Mahant Piara Das of Dera Maru Das, Alawalpur, Jalandhar.<sup>9</sup> This confirms the independent working of the *Udāsī* establishments.

All the *Udāsī* centres had been in one way or the other attached to one of the parent body that is *dhuan* or *bakhshish*, but this relation was limited upto spiritual affiliation only. By spiritual affiliation it means that they were having relation with the parental organisations, as some had been the old *chelas* or followers of either *dhuan* or *bakhshish*. As such they respected the parental body and paid obeisance to it. Besides this, the parent body had no control or power to interfere in the working of the internal affairs of the *Akhara*, *dera*, *Samadh*, *asthan*, *Gurdwara*, *temple*, or *dharmsalas*. Each *Udāsī* centre functioned independently in its administration, financial matters, and other religious and semi-religious affairs.<sup>10</sup>

## II

The *Udāsī* centres of the early 19th century may broadly be classified into four groups. Firstly, there were centres which claimed no affiliation with any order of the *Udāsīs*. They formed nearly fifty percent of the total of two hundred and fifty establishment towards the end of the Sikh rule. Secondly, there were institutions which claimed affiliation with one or another of the *bakhshishes*. Thirdly, there were institutions which claimed affiliation with one or the other of four *dhuan*s. Fourthly, there were also some centres which traced their existence to some important *Udāsī Mahants*, directly or indirectly associated with either *dhuan* or a *bakhshish*. Each category included rural and urban *Udāsī* centres varying in number, size, nomenclature, and resources.<sup>11</sup>

The centres having no affiliation with any Order of the *Udāsīs* had come up largely during the first half of the 19th century. Though some of these centres claimed spiritual ties with a parent establishment, each of them functioned independently. Over a hundred of these were located in villages and the rest in towns and cities. Nearly a hundred of these institutions were known as *dharmsalas*, over a dozen as *deras* and *Akharas*, and over a dozen as *Darbars* and *Gurdwaras*,<sup>12</sup> but a close

<sup>9</sup> As told by Mahant Piara Das of Dera Maru Das at Alawalpur, in Jalandhar, 21-06-2008.

<sup>10</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *The Udasis Under the Sikh Rule* (1750-1850), Ph. D. Thesis, Department of History Guru Nanak Dev University, 1985, pp. 75-76.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>12</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 67-68.

association existed between many of these *Deras*, *Akharas*, *dharmsalas* and *Darbars*. Sulakhan Singh has given examples of existing ties between these establishments.

The *dharmsalas* established at Mahadevi and Dhing in the Sheikhpura district had for example spiritual ties with the *Dharamsala* at Moodhwala in the same district. The Sikh *Darbars* known as Balkarira Sahib and Mal Asthan Sahib at Nankana were spiritually linked with the main *Darbars* at Nankana Sahib. The *dharmsalas* of the village Kacha Pakka was linked with the important *Udāsī Dera* of Bhai Phuman Sahh in Montgomery district.<sup>13</sup> The link between these *deras*, *darbars*, *dharmsalas*, and *Gurdwaras* according to the author was of spiritual nature only.<sup>14</sup> It means that they were recognizing the spiritual authority of the other *deras*, *darbars*, *dharmsalas* *akharas* or *gurdwaras* to which it was related by one way or the other, but as far as internal organisation and administration of the institution was concerned they were independent.

The second category was of those establishments which were supposed to be affiliated with one or another *bakhshish*. The majority of these had come up in the late 18th century. The origin and possible affiliation of these centres can be traced because of their known spiritual ties with the founders of *bakhshishes* mentioned in the documentary and *Panda Vahi* records. *Akhara* of Santokh Das according to the *Panda Vahi, records*, claimed affiliation with the *bakhshish* of Mihan Sahib or Bhai Pheru.<sup>15</sup> With the *bakhshish* of Bhagat Bhagwan were said to have been affiliated about 260 *gaddis* in Bihar' only the Bibeksar Akhara at Amritsar is known to have been affiliated with the order of Bhagat Bhagwan.<sup>16</sup> In all, over a hundred centres were claimed to have been affiliated with the *bakhshish* of Sangat Sahib through his *chelas*, notably Narain Das, Bhai Bindraban, Bhai Ajit Sahib, Jainti Das and Chukha Sahib and, in turn, through their *chelas*.

The third category was of those centres which claimed to be affiliated with one or another of the four *dhuans*. They had come up before and during the period of early Sikh rule. Both in rural and urban areas, they consisted of *deras* and *akharas*

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<sup>13</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p-68

<sup>14</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *The Udasis Under the Sikh Rule* (1750-1850), p. 81.

<sup>15</sup> With the *sanad* of Sahib Buddha at Ram Das were affiliated the *dharmsalas* at Kot Naina in *tehsil* Shakargarh and at Tejanwall in *tehsil* Batala in the Gurdaspur district.'

<sup>16</sup> The centres affiliated with the *bakhshishes* of Jit Mal, Sodhi Dakhni Rai, Sadhu Nand Lal, the Diwane and the Ram Rai ke Udasi are not known from any other source than Giani Gian Singh. See, Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p-72.

and *dharmshalas* of small, medium, and large size. The *dera* of Charan Shah at Bahadurpur and a *dera* at Chinighati in the Hoshiarpur district claimed affiliation with the *dhuan* of Phul Sahib." Similarly, there are many such examples of the *deras* affiliated to different *dhuan*s.<sup>17</sup>

The fourth category consisted of some centres which traced their existence to some important *Udāsī Mahants*, directly or indirectly associated with either a *dhuan* or a *bakhshish*. Centres associated with the *Nange Udāsīs* at Amritsar and Patiala claimed affiliation with *Mahant Pritam Das*.<sup>18</sup> The *Nirbans* and the *Niranjanias*, two sub-sections of the *Nange Udāsīs*, owed their origins to him. Pritam Das, the *Mahant* of a famous *Udāsī Akhara* in Amritsar, presently known as Akhara Sangalwala, founded a centre at Haridwar which came to be known as *Bara Akhara* or Great *Akhara*. All the centres connected with the four *dhuan*s were believed to be linked with the *Akhara* of Pritam Das. Similarly, Santokh Das, the founder of *Akhara Brahmbuta*, situated in the precincts of the Golden Temple at Amritsar, established an *Akhara* of his own, known as *chhota* or *Naya Akhara*, probably towards the close of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign.<sup>19</sup> All the centres affiliated to the *bakhshish* of Bhai Pheru or Sangat Sahib was believed to be linked with the *Akhara* of Santokh Das.<sup>19</sup>

### III

The memorandum of Rules and Regulations contained the guidelines for the organizers of the *Udāsīn* sect, to manage and control the various organizations under them. It becomes imperative first to understand the aims and objectives of the society of the *Udāsī* sect named "Sri 108 Pujiyapad advait Punch Parmeshwar Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin Nirwan genrally know as Panchaiti Akhara Bara Undasin", in order to understand the organizational structure of the *Akharas*:

#### I AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. The aims and objectives of the society were to promulgate and propagate the religious, ritual, philosophical, and spiritual tenets of *Udāsīs* and *Udāsī* sect

<sup>17</sup> The Udasi centre at Charan Kaul near Anandpur Sahib in the Hoshiarpur district, the *Akhara* of Baba Ganga Ram Kashiwala at Amritsar claimed association with the *dhuan* of Balu Hasna. The Sangalwala *Akhara* of Pritam Das at Amritsar claimed its affiliation with the *dhuan* of Goinda but only through Mihan Sahib, the founder of a *bakhshish*, and Baba Bankhandey. The *Nirbans* and the *Niranjanias*, two sub-sections of the *Nange Udasis*, owed their origins to Mahant Pritam Das. Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in Sikh The Tradition*, p-74.

<sup>18</sup> Pritam Das of Sangalwala Akhara at Amritsar claimed its affiliation with the *dhuan* of Goinda but only through Mihan Sahib, the founder of a *bakhshish*, and Baba Bankhandey. *Ibid*, p. 74.

<sup>19</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, pp. 1275-80.

by all legitimate means and ways including touring and preaching, which a section of the society does.<sup>20</sup>

2. To provide and arrange for food and shelter of all *Udāsīn Sants* and *Mahants* who visit Prayag (Allahbad), Haridwar, Ujjain and Trimbuk on occasions of *Kumbh* and *Ardh-Kumbh* where the *Akhara* hoists its flag (*Dhwaja Sahib*) and establishes its camp.<sup>21</sup>
3. To provide and arrange for food and residence for those *Sants* and *Mahants* of the *Udāsīn* sect who visit the head office and the branches of the *Akhara* as pilgrims.
4. To act as supervising and guiding authority in matters of installations, appointment and expulsion of *Mahants* of various *Deras*, *Maths*, *Sangats*, *Asthans*, Temple, and *Akharas*. To take legal and other necessary steps to prevent interference in the management, appointment, installation and expulsion of the *sants* and *Mahants* of the aforesaid places by false claimants and unauthorized persons; and further to take possession of all or any of the places above named in case there is left no proper or fit person to act as *Mahant* and to incur all necessary expenses to carry out all above objects.
5. To establish *Pathshalas* for imparting spiritual and religious education and for teaching Sanskrit.
6. The *Mahant* of the centre is empowered to invest money to increase the income of the *Akhara*. The *Mahant* can start a new business to achieve the said purpose. This business may also be carried on by all or any of the *Mahants* of the *Akhara* at the Head office and branches.
7. To distribute food to poor irrespective of caste and creed and give help to other charitable and educational institutions as the governing body may decide.
8. To invest the *Akhara* money in all lawful business, as the governing body may decide from time to time.

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<sup>20</sup> Registered Document containing the ‘*Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin, Allahabad(Head Office)*’, signed under Assistant Registrar, Chit Fund and Societies, UP Kanpur, 1983, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>21</sup> On inquiry it was found that centres vied with one another to seek control of important location at haridwar much earlier than the beginning of the Kumbh Mela by installing their flag at the selected place. It indicates and demarcates their camp site.

The head office of the *Udāsi Akhara Bara* is at Allahbad, and its branches are spread to the different parts of the country.<sup>22</sup> The income of the *Akhara* is derived from many other sources like *Zamindari*, rent from houses and shops, sale of *bagh bahar*, interest from money invested or given in loans, offerings, sale of grains and timber forests any other lawful business or trade.

Money lending business of the *Akhara* shall be carried on at the head office and at the various branches through *asthania Mahants (Mokamis)* and all income derived from this source and other sources shall form the part of the entire income of the *Akhara* received from all sources, and shall be spent on the objects as derived in the memorandum.<sup>23</sup>

The *Udāsi Akharas* own property in shape of agricultural land, shops, houses, gardens, and grooves. The information was given by the *Shri Mahants* of both the *Bara* and *Naya Akhara* at Haridwar. The *Shri Mahant* at *Bara Akhara*, Shankra Das had disclosed the presence of large tract of agricultural land and other property existing within in the vicinity of Haridwar only. He also informed that such property was looked after by the *mahants, sadhs, chelas*, and other official dignitaries appointed for the said purpose, by the *Udāsi Akhara Bara*, Allahbad, from time to time. As such, all the managers are responsible for their work to the main head office and they work according to the rules and regulations formulated so. The management can take disciplinary actions against the errant managers and there are instances where the heads had been either transferred or even suspended for the non-performance of their duties assigned to them.

All the property moveable and immovable that exist now and may here after be acquired shall remain vested in the governing body of the *Akhara* for the time being whose members shall be deemed as trustees, but such vesting shall not create any personal right or title either in the governing body or its members. The real ownership rests permanently in the aforesaid society itself.<sup>24</sup>

To understand the working of the *Akharas*, its organizational structure, rules and regulations memorandum published by the *Panchaiti Akhara Bara*, Allahbad,

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<sup>22</sup> The general body of the *Mahants* has been empowered to change the location of the head office and may establish new branches if it desires so, but with the approval of the majority of sitting in the house.

<sup>23</sup> Registered document containing the '*Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*', p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

serves a useful purpose.<sup>25</sup> On a visit to the *Bara Akhara* and *Naya Akhara* at Haridwar and on subsequent inquiry, it was found that the administrative structure of these organisations was almost same except for the difference in the number of establishments, *Mahants*, *sadhs*, and *chelas* managing and looking after the *khara*, *dera*, *Samadh*, *asthan*, *Gurdwara*, *temple*, or *dharmsalas*. The *Shri Mahant* Shankar Das and *Shri Mahant* Raghu Muni who were present at that time along with Rajinder Das *Kothari*, of *Bara Akhara*, Haridwar confirmed that no difference between the two *Akharas* existed as far the organizational structure was concerned. The similar view was expressed by the *Shri Mahant* of *Naya Akhara*, Haridwar. As per his information; The *Akhara* is governed by a body, consisting of *Sri Mahants*, *Mukhia Mahant*, *Kothari*, *Karobari*, *Mukami Mahants*, *Asthania Mahants*, *Nirvan*, *Vastradhari* and local *Mahants*. The members of the different centres send their representatives who further elect the governing body.

## II RULES AND REGULATIONS

The order of the *Udāsī Akharas* consist of the following members and organisers who manage the affairs and working of their respective institutions which they head like; *Udāsīn Sadhu*, *Jhara Akhara*, *Shri Mahant*, *Mukhia Mahant*, *Mukami (Asthania Mahants)* *Local Mahants*, *Nirvan*, and *Vastra Dhari*.<sup>26</sup>

1. ***Udāsīn Sadhs:-*** the term *Udāsīn sadhu* wherever it is mentioned here after shall mean and include all persons who have been fully initiated in the *Udāsīn* -celibate cult in accordance with the tenets and rituals founded by Acharya Srichandra Dev. He shall be a celibate and a *Jatajut Dhari*. Only such *Udāsīn Sadhus* shall be entitled to be enrolled as a member of the *Akhara*.
2. ***Jhara Akhara:-*** means a ceremony in which any new entrant after handing over every belonging moveable and immovable owned by him to the *Akhara* swear by placing his hand on *Gola Sahib* that he shall follow all rules and regulations of the *Akhara* during the period of his membership and he will be maintained by the *Akhara*.
3. ***Shri Mahant:-*** means the senior most *Mahant* among the *Mukhiya Mahants* who are elected in accordance with the rules mentioned hereafter. ‘Those who

<sup>25</sup> Registered document containing the ‘*Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*’ p. 4 ; Also See Appendix V.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.



were honoured and respected by other *Mahants* were known as *Shri Mahants*'.<sup>27</sup>

4. **Mukhia Mahant:-** means four *Mahants* who are elected as such in accordance with the rules of the *Akhara*.
5. **Mukami (Asthania Mahants) Local Mahants:-** means those persons who are appointed in accordance with the rules of the *Akhara* and are entrusted with the management of the head office and the branches of the *Akhara*.
6. **Nirvan:-** means and includes all those *Udāsīn sadhus* who have joined the *Akhara* after performing the *Jhara Akhara*.
7. **Vastra Dhari:-** means a minor *Udāsīn sadhu* whose age is below 18 years, but who has been initiated as an *Udāsīn* and admitted in the *Akhara*.
8. **Padhat:** north, south, east, west.
9. **Dhuni:** means a group of three *nirvana* and one *vastradhari*.
10. **Tangtor:** this title is given to any *vastradhari* on *Kumbh* or *ardh kumbh* when he attains majority.

From the above description it becomes clear that the *Udāsī Akhara Bara* has its own hierarchy of members and managers. The head priest in this category is *Shri Mahant*, who manages all the affairs of the *Akharas* and other establishments under him. *Shri Mahants* are those who are the holder of *Uch Gaddi* (the holder of Highest Position among *Mahants*) and are respected by the other provincial *Mahants*<sup>28</sup> He does not own any property or any institution under him.

*Shri Mahant* visits all the places related with the *Akhara* and stays there for a stipulated time. His stay is made comfortable and he is looked after by the *Mahants* or the other incharge, whatever may be the case, of the *deras* which he visits. He is always accompanied by many other *Mahants* and office bearers, who follow him throughout his religious journey. It served two purposes;<sup>29</sup> one, it provided the opportunity to the head to be always on the move, thus leaving no time and scope for him to create dominance at one particular place, secondly it also kept a sort of vigil on the *Mahants* who look after and maintain the different shrines. It also inculcates a feeling of belongingness towards the organisation as a united whole and binds them together.

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<sup>27</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampradaye ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 53.

<sup>28</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> As told by *Mahant Shankra Das* at *Bara Akhara, Kankhal, Haridwar* on 25-12-2008.

The other important post in the hierarchy of the organisation is of the *Mukhia Mahants* who are four in number. *Shri Mahant* is one of the senior most *Mahants* among the *Mukhia Mahants*.<sup>30</sup> It is only limited upto the documents, in reality all the *Mukhia Mahants* and the *Shri Mahant* hold the same position and receives the similar veneration from the other *Mahants* and members of the *Akharas*.<sup>31</sup>

The establishments of the *Udāsīs* Akharas are divided into four zones known as *Padhat*, north, south, east, and west and each is headed and managed by *Shri Mahant* and *Mukhia Mahants* and other managers. There are over all total 20 such branches given in the document.<sup>32</sup>

(1) Benares. Mohalla Bhadeni, (2) Kankhal, Sanaranpur, District U.P., (3) Gaya. Mohalla Sahibganj (Bihar), ( 4 ) Sultangunj Bhagalpur District (5) Asargunj, Monghyr District, (6) Pratap Tahda, Muzaffarpur District, (7) Gopigunj, ( Benaras State), (8) Ballia (U, P.), (9) Bindraban Muthra District, (10) Patlala (Patiala Stats ), (11) Kurukshetra, Thaneshwar (Punjab ), (12) Ujjain (Gwalior State) (13) Trimbuk, (14) Hyderabad (Hyderabad State) (16) Guntur Mohalla Lal Talab Talab, (16) Shivakanchivarum (Bigkanjivarum) Madras (17) Ram Dhuni (Nepal State ), (18) Dayalpur District Gurgaon ( Punjab ), (19) Sandila Mohalla Khatri Tola, District Hardoi, (20) Rameshwaram.

The document of the memorandum also mentions *Padhati*:- means the branches under 9 headings.<sup>33</sup> *Almast*, *Phul-sahib*, *Govind sahib*, *Balu Hasna*, *Bhagat Bhagwan*, *Mehan Sahib*, *Diwana Sahib*, *Ajit Mal*, *Vakhatma*

The above mentioned branches include *dhuans* and *bakhshishes* connected with *Bara Akhara*. The memorandum does not give any detail besides the names.

## MANAGEMENT

(A) ***Punch Parmeshwar***:— This is a touring section of the *Akhara*- which is on a constant move and tours all over India. Under an old established convention and custom, the touring is and shall always be done on foot. It is accompanied by elephants, camels, and horses. During such tours the body preaches the

<sup>30</sup> Registered document containing the ‘*Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*’, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> The only difference which was discovered from the interview was that *Shri Mahant* was a supposed to be moving from one place to the other along with other *Mukhia Mahants*, *Mahants*, other *chelas* and followers: As told by *Shri Mahant Shankra Das* at *Bara Akhara*, *Kankhal*, *Haridwar* on 25-12-2008.

<sup>32</sup> Registered document containing the ‘*Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*’, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p-3

religious tenets of *Udāsī* sect, and also visits the Head office and the Branches. The (*Isht Dev*) is carried on an elephant. It has and shall have the following personnel the number may vary according to the exigencies of time, but the number of the *Mukhia Mahants* shall ever remain four,

1. Four *Mukhia Mahants* including one *Shri Mahant*.
2. The maximum number of *Nirvans* shall not exceed 70.
3. *Vastra dharis* shall also not exceed 24.

Besides the above mentioned *Shri Mahant*, *Mukhia Mahants* and *Vastra Dhari* the memorandum mentions the following list of the other functionaries which help in the working and management of the *Akharas* and which shall not exceed 98 as follows; ( 1 ) *Pujari* one ( 2 ) *Kothari* one, ( 3 ) *Karbari* two ( 4 ) *Bhandari* one. (5) *Kotwal* one, ( 6 ) *Patel* four.

The above mentioned functionaries shall be selected by *Shri Mahant* and *Mukhia Mahants*. They shall be under their direct subordination and the selectors shall have the authority of appointment and dismissal of the functionaries.<sup>34</sup>

**(B)(1) *Asthania Mahants*:-** The entire management of the Head office and the branches shall be carried on by the *Asthania Mahants* ( *Mokamis* ) in the manner herein prescribed, and they will be elected in the manner given below. The number of *Aslhsnia Mahants* (*Mokamis* ) for the head office and for any branch shall depend on the amount and nature of the work and institution, and this number shall be fixed by the *Mukhia Mahants* and the *Shri Mahant*, and may vary according to the needs of the time.

- (2) The *Asthania Mahants* [*Mokamis*] shall be elected from amongst the *nirvans* and shall primarily be taken from the *Pudhits* of Almast Sahib: Balu Hasna Sahib, Bhagat Bhagwan Sahib, and Mehan Sahib. The authority of such selection is entrusted to the *Mukhia Mahants* and the *Shri Mahant* who are further empowered and authorized to select if they so choose and *nirvan* of *pudhit* Phul Shah Sahab, *Pudhit* Diwana Sahab and *pudhit* Ajit Mal Sahab and Bhaghat Mal Sahab as *Asthania Mahants* [*Mokamis*]. The Authority of dismissal and transfer of *asthania Mahants* (*Mokamis*) is also vested in the *Mukhia Mahants* and the *Shri Mahant*.

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<sup>34</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', p. 4.

- (3) The entire management of all the affairs and the properties both moveable, immoveable and cash at the head office and at the branches shall remain in the sole charge of the *Asthanias Mahants (Mokamis)* of such places collectively and individually.

The Managements subject to local circumstances and conditions if any shall be carried on in the following manner:—

- (a) There shall be one *Kothari* and a *Karbari* selected by the *Asthanias Mahants (Mokamis)* from amongst them by a majority of votes. The *Kothari* so appointed shall be responsible for all cash and moveable entrusted to him. He shall also keep regular accounts of all receipts and expenditure. The *Asthanias Mahants (Mokamis)* may also appoint or employ any paid accountant for writing the account book or for any other such purpose.
- (b) The *Asthanias Mahants (Mokamis)* of the Head office and branches may appoint one or more *Asthanias Mahant (Mokamis)* -from amongst them to remain in charge of villages there respectively for the purpose of collecting and realizing rents and issuing receipts on behalf of the *Akhara*. The *Asthanias Mahants (Mokamis)* shall also be empowered to appoint any *karindas* for this purpose. If they so desire. All realisations shall be deposited with the *Kothari* of the head office or the branch as the case may be.
- (c) All suits arising out of moveable and immoveable properties belonging to the *Akhara* shall be filed by the *Asthanias Mahant (Mokami)* of the head office or of any of (the branches as the case may be for and on behalf of the *Akhara*. The powers ns are provided under section 6 of Act XXI of 1860 (Societies Registration Act ) are entrusted to the *asthanias Mahants( Mokamis)* of the head office or the branches where the disputed property is situated or the money transaction has occurred. In all judicial and non judicial proceedings concerning the head office or any of the branches the *Akhara* shall be represented by all or any of the *asthanias Mahants ( Mokamis )* of the place concerned.<sup>35</sup>
- (d) Documents of all descriptions including pronotes, Mortgages, *Hundis* and other such deeds relating to Money lending shall be executed in favour of *Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*, but it is permissible that the name of any

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<sup>35</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', p. 5.

*Mukami (Asthania Mahant) Mukhia Mahant and Shri Mahant* may be entered in such documents. It is especially provided that the entry of such name or names does not and shall not confer or create any right or title in favour of the *(Mukami) asthania Mahant. Mukhia Mahant and Shri Mahant* whose name is so entered. Any document in favour of the *Akhara* may be described in any language or terms and the entry of any *(Mokami) Asthania Mahants, Mukhia Mahants and Shri Mahant* name in it does not and shall not in any way effect the rights of the *Akhara*. It is further provided that any *Mukami (Asthania Mahant)* empowered by the unanimous or majority vote of the *Asthania Samiti* may present any document for registration before a sub Registrar or any other officer who is empowered to register documents, on behalf of the *Akhara* and such presentation shall be deemed a presentation by or on behalf of the *Akhara*.

- (e) The *Asthania Mahants ( Mokamis )* are authorized to receive, realize and collect all monies and sums payable and due to the *Akhara* from all Government Departments, local bodies, banks, courts civil and revenue, registered and unregistered companies, find issue, discharge or give receipts under their own signatures for and on behalf of the *Akhara*. They are further authorized to hold, to receive, and endorse Government promissory Notes, securities and Shares and debentures of public and private bodies. These rights may be exercised by any of the *Asthania Mahants (Mokamis)*.<sup>36</sup>

### III COMMITTEES

There shall be 2 committees namely: —

1. Governing Body.
2. *Asthania* committee ( Local Committee )<sup>37</sup>

#### 1) Governing Body

It shall be composed of the four *Mukhia Mahants* including the *Shri Mahant* and all the *Asthania Mahants [ Mokamis ]* posted at the head office and the branches, and they shall be deemed as members of the governing body.

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<sup>36</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', p. 6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p-6

## POWERS

1. The Governing Body is empowered to make Bye-laws from time to time when ever such necessity arises for the better management of the *Akhara* and for the general guidance of the *Asthania Mahants* [ *mokamis* ]. The governing body shall also be deemed as the general committee of the *Akhara*.
2. The governing body shall meet at least once in a year- The .place and time of such meeting shall be fixed by tin secretary who shall be sent to all members,
3. The governing body shall appoint one of its own members in the annual meeting as an auditor who shall audit the accounts of the head office and the branches and who shall submit his report and the governing body may take any action which it may deem necessary.
4. The governing body shall also be empowered to amend, alter or cancel or add any rule or regulation of the *Akharas* not inconsistent with the aims and objects and may also in like manner add, amend and alter the memorandum.
5. The quorum of the meeting shall be 25. Such meeting shall be presided by *Shri Mahant* if he is present otherwise by any senior *Mukhia Mahant*.

The governing body comprises of *Shri Mahant* and *Mukhia Mahants*. The by laws of the memorandum empowers the general body to take all the major decision regarding the *Akhara* and its working. They had been empowered to appoint to dismiss all the functionaries of the *Akhara*. They could also take any decision regarding shifting of the head office, monetary transactions, selecting and assigning the management of *deras*, *Samadh*, *asthan*, *temple*, *dharmsalas* etc.. The governing body holds meeting at least once in a year and beside that it could be called for as and when required by the management.

## 2) ASTHANIA COMMITTEE

The head office and every branch of the *Akhara* shall have its own *Asthania* committee which shall be composed of all the *mukamis* [*Asthania Mahants*] of that place. Each *Asthania* committee shall be responsible for the management of the head office and the branches separately under its separate charge. It shall hold its meetings as many times as it finds necessary. The quorum of such meetings shall be five, but if in any branch the number of *mukamis* {*Asthania Mahant*} is less than five in that case all the *Mukamis* (*Asthania Mahants*) must be present in all meetings. A register

containing all the proceedings of the meetings of the *Asthania* committee shall be maintained at every place and a copy of all the proceedings shall be sent to the secretary within a fortnight of such meeting. It had the power to add and alter any rule and regulation in the memorandum as and when it feels necessary to do so. They shall be in full charge and control of the entire touring section of the *Akhara*. The general body also decides the quarrel arising within its members. A seal of the *Akhara* shall be kept in the *Kothar* of *Punch Parmeshwar* and shall be affixed on orders of appointment, transfer and dismissal of *Mukamis (Asthania Mahants)* and shall also be affixed on all correspondence. The committee appoints a secretary and assistant secretary from the *Mukhia Mahants* for the smooth working. In the absence of the *Shri Mahant* the work of the general body is carried by *Mukhia Mahants*.

It shall be the duty of the *Kothari* to call a meeting of the *Asthania Samiti* by issuing a notice along with agenda at least a week before.

#### **IV MUKHIA MAHANTS ELECTION AND POWERS**

##### **Election**

All the members of the governing body, the *nirvans* and *Punch Parmeshwar* and other *Mahants* of the *Udāsīn* sect who may be present at the time of election, shall elect *Mukhia Mahants* form amongst the members of the Governing Body and the *Nirvans* by majority of votes.<sup>38</sup> The aforesaid *mukhia mahants* shall be elected one from each of the four *Paddhits* namely. Almast Sahib, Bhagat Bhagwan. Mehan Sahib and Balu Hasna Sahib. Their dismissal shall also be affected In the manner described above:—

##### **Power**

In addition to the powers already mentioned herein before under different rules of the *Akhara*, *Mukhia Mahants* shall also exercise the following powers as well.

1. The *Mukhia Mahants* including the *Shri Mahants* are the chief functionaries of the *Akhara*, and they will exercise the powers of general supervision over the head office and all the branches of the *Akhara*.
2. The final sanction for admission of any *Nirvan* in the *Akhara* shall be given by the *Mukhia Mahants* including the *Shri Mahant*.

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<sup>38</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', p. 7.

3. They shall be in full charge and control of the entire touring section of the *Akhara*.
4. The key of the *Kothar* of the touring section of *Akhara* shall remain with the *Shri Mahant*.
5. The *Mukhia Mahants* including the *Shri Mahant* are empowered to expel the *Nirvan* who in their opinion is undesirable or quarrels with another *Nirvan* from the *Jamat*.
6. A seal of the *Akhara* shall be kept in the *Kothar* of *Panch Parmeshwar* and shall be affixed on orders of appointment, transfer and dismissal of *Mukamis* (*Asthania Mahants*) and shall also be affixed on all correspondence addressed by *Punch Parmeshwar* to the Head office and the branches. The affixing of the seal does not dispense with the signatures of the present *Mahant*.
7. The Managing committee shall be empowered to appoint one Secretary and one assistant secretary from amongst the *Mukamis* (*Asthania Mahants*). The dismissal of such office bearers shall also rest with them. The two secretaries shall be posted at the head office.
8. In the absence of *Shri Mahant*, his powers shall exercise be *Mukhia Mahant*.

The governing body consists of four *Mukhia Mahants* including *Shri Mahant*, all the *Asthania Mahants*, and other important members posted at head office and the branches. The body is empowered to elect the official dignitaries, *Mukhia Mahants*, and others by the majority of votes present. The quorum of the meeting shall be twenty five. The *Mukhia Mahants* including the *Shri Mahants* are the chief functionaries of the *Akhara*. Any new entrant as *Nirvan* needs to seek approval of the *Mukhia Mahants* and the *Shri Mahant*. The body has the power to expel the *Nirvans*. All the decisions of the committee are finally signed and sealed under the *Shri Mahant* and *Mukhia Mahants*. The Managing committee shall be empowered to appoint one Secretary and one assistant secretary from amongst the *Mukamis* (*Asthania Mahants*). The managing committee also takes decisions on the disputes arising among the fellow members. The decision of the governing body is applicable on all.



## **V POWERS OF SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY**

1. To convene annual general meeting of the Governing Body.<sup>39</sup>
2. To keep two registers of all proceedings of the general and the managing Committee meeting and maintain also register of the members of the managing committee.
3. To exercise powers as secretaries to file and defend suits, civil, revenue and criminal for or on behalf of the *Akhara*, but this does not override the powers entrusted to the *Asthanian Mahants (Mokamis)*.
4. To appoint *Mukhtar-ams* whenever such appointment is deemed necessary by the secretaries jointly and separately for the Head office and the Branches for all or any of the purpose of Management.
5. To receive and realize all monies payable to *Akhara* from all Government Departments, local bodies, banks, courts civil and revenue, registered and unregistered bodies and companies, including money due in respect of Government Bonds, Government Promissory Notes securities and shares and debentures, of public and private bodies due to the *Akhara*, and issue receipts under their own signature for and on behalf of *Akhara*.
6. To exercise any other power that may be given them either by the *Mukhia Mahants* including the *Shri Mahant* or by the Governing Body,
7. In connection with the *pairvi* and conduct of any case if it is found that the work is suffering on account of the negligence of any *Mukami (Asthanian Mahant)* the secretary shall be consent of the *Asthanian Mahants* be fully empowered to intervene and at all times take proper steps with a view to safeguard the interests of the *Akhara*.

## **VI GENERAL**

- (1) The *Panchyati Akhara Bara Udāsīn* is established from time immemorial, and all its office bearers, members<sup>40</sup> *Nirvana* and *Vastra Dharis* are honorary and devote their lives in the service of the *Udāsī Akhara*, it is provided that under no circumstances and by no reason, the Governing Body, its members, or any other body that may be appointed at any other time, shall have power to dissolve this society registered as the *Panchaiti Akhara Bara Ramat*. It shall

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<sup>39</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

be the sacred, moral, and legal duty of all the members of the *Akhara* to perform their duties faithfully and honestly and every endeavour to maintain the present status of the *Panchyati Akhara* intact.

- (2) Any *Asthanian Mahant* (*Mokami*) who shall steal, or embezzle any money or other property willfully and maliciously destroy or injure any property of the *Akhara* shall forge any deed, bond, security for money, receipt or other instrument, whereby the funds of the *Akhara* may be exposed to loss, shall be subject to the usual legal proceedings for his bad conduct.
- (3) The entry in all revenue papers regarding the landed and house property of the *Akhara* shall be made in the name of the *Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*.
- (4) That a register will be kept at the Head office which shall contain the names and full addresses of all *Mukhia Mahant* including the *Shri Mahant*, and *Asthanian Mahant* (*Mukhia*) It shall also contain an entry against each name, the time of appointment, transfer, dismissal, resignation and death of the aforesaid persons.
- (5) If the *Asthanian* committee in its meeting decides by a majority of votes that any immovable property of the *Akhara* is yielding no profits or sale to the *Akhara* than on obtaining the written permission of the Present *Mahants* of *Punch Parmeshwar* and the secretaries then it may by its resolution authorize any *Mukami* (*Asthanian Mahant*) or secretary to sell it and execute a transfer deed on behalf of the *Akhara*.
- (6) The burden of maintenance of all the members of *Akhara* is and shall be on the *Akhara*.
- (7) Every *Asthanian* committee shall send a copy of the accounts maintained at the Branches to the General Secretary of the head office every year, by *Baisakh Badi 15*.

All the dignitaries of the *Akhara* work selflessly without drawing any emoluments from the establishment. Since the day of their initiation into the *Udāsī Panth* they become, physically and mentally aligned to it. They work for the welfare and betterment of the establishment as an honorary worker and in lieu of their services, it becomes the duty and obligation of the establishment to look after their needs and requirements. They are supposed to respect and guard the doctrines and practices of the *Udāsī Panth* and also to protect the interest of the *Akhara*. All the financial enterprise carried out by the managers are scrutinized and verified and the

provision is made to punish the guilty, who indulges in the misappropriation of the *Panth's* funds. All the monetary transactions are carried in the name of the *Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*. No official of the *Panth* is allowed to carry any monetary transactions in individual name and if found can be punished. The *Panchaiti Akhara Bara* is responsible for all the profits and loss incurred during the business transactions. But the by laws prohibit its members to not to indulge in the business pursuits as their primary motive is religious. All the establishments are required to submit their financial report of purchase and expenditure to the managing committee, which is further checked and verified. Any big expenditure may be of construction or purchase of some product or commodity requires prior sanction and approval of the governing body.

## VII ADMISSION

All *Udāsīn Sadhus* are entitled to be admitted in the *Akhara* provided he has performed his *Jhara Akhara* before any *Mukhiya Mahant* or *Shri Mahant* and has taken the following oath by placing his hand on *Gola Sahib* in his hind; and after handing over every belonging of his moveable, immoveable and cash to the *Akhara*.<sup>41</sup> That so long as he remains In the *Akhara* in any capacity he shall perform his *duties* entrusted to him faithfully and honestly, and that whatever monies properties movable or immoveable he gains or acquires by his own exertion independent of the *Akhara* during the period of his membership shall be the property of the *Akhara* and that shall be not claim any right or title over such property nor any of his heirs or any such right.

## VIII PROHIBITION

- (1) All *Mukhia Mahants*, *Shri Mahant* and *Mukamis (Asthania Mahants)* are strictly forbidden during their period of membership either to start or be a party to any litigation or legal proceedings in connection with or arising out of any dispute about the properly or the *Asthan* of their original Guru and *gaddi* as a plaintiff or as a defendant but if he does so the *Akhara* shall not in any way be responsible for any loss or costs arising or resulting there from nor such proceedings be deemed to be proceedings on behalf of the *Akhara*.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Registered document containing the '*Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin*', p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p.10.

- (2) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant* and (*Mukamis*) *Asthanla Mahant* shall be competent to transfer in any way by gift sale or otherwise except by way of lease any immovable property belonging to the *Akhara*. A transfer can only be effected in the manner prescribed here in before.
- (3) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant* and *Asthanla Mahant* ( *Mukami*) shall waste or deal with the *Akhara* property cash, goods and articles in any unauthorized way or apply the same for any objects other than those mentioned) in the memorandum.
- (4) The expenses of the head office and the branches shall not exceed their respective incomes.
- (5) All *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant* and (*Mukamis*) *Asthanla Mahant* and *Nirvans* and *vastra dharis* shall remain celebrate.
- (6) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant* and *Asthanla Mahant* (*Mukami* ) shall be competent to start or be a party to any private business of trade of his own during the period of his membership.
- (7) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant, and Asthanla Mahant* (*Mokami*) shall be competent to initiate any *chela* so long as they are in the *Akhara*.

Exception:- A *Mahant* of Ram Dhuni Sahab in Nepal may initiate a *Chela*.<sup>43</sup>

- (8) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant, Mokami* (*Asthanla* ) secretary or member of the *Akhara* can or shall by himself alone have any right or authority to settle by way of lease or otherwise any land with any body on behalf of the *Akhara* except by a resolution passed by the majority of the *Mahants* or *Mukamis* of that place in a meeting held for that purpose after due notice to all the persons concerned of the place.
- (9) All *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant, and Asthanla Mahant* (*Mokami*) shall follow and strictly observe all the tenets and rituals of the *Udāsī* sect and none of them shall change his religion or sect.
- (10) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant, and Asthanla Mahant* (*Mukami*) shall be competent for reasons mentioned herein to abolish the head office or any branch of the *Akhara*,
- (11) No *Mukhia Mahant, Shri Mahant, and Asthanla Mahant* ( *Mokami* ) shall be competent to get his name entered in any *Akhara* property as an owner.

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<sup>43</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', p. 11.

(12) No *Mukhia Mahant*, *Shri Mahant*, and *Asthania Mahant (Mokami)* shall be competent to take any loan or insure any liability for or on behalf of the *Akhara*.<sup>44</sup>

The above memorandum bears the signatures of the Secretary, *Mahants*, *Kothari*, *Asthania Mahants*, and other managers<sup>45</sup> of the *Bara Akhara* all belonging to Allahbiad, and they are mentioned as such;

Sd. *Dharam Das* Secretary, *Allahabad*.  
Sd. *Krishna Gopal Asthania* (Local) *Mahant*, *Allahabad*  
Sd. *Bisheshwar Dass*, *Asthania* (Local) *Mahant*, *Allahabad*  
Sd. *Hari Dass*, *Asthania Mahant*, (Kothari), *Allahabad*  
Sd. *Mohan Dass*, *Asthania* (Local) *Mahant*, *Allahabad*  
Sd. *Mukhia Mahant Hand Dass Ji*, *Allahabad*  
Sd. *Sant Saran Asthania Mahant*, *Allahabad*

#### IV

The *dharmsalas* generally consisted of a single room or two for the purpose of keeping the *Adi-Granth* and for providing accommodation to the *Mahant*, in the same structure or very close to it. The *dharmsalas* were inhabited and looked after by the *Mahants*. On enquiry from the Swami Shankra Das, *Shri Mahant* of *Akhara Bara*, Hardwar, Mahant Ravinder Das, Dera Bahadurpur, Hoshiarpur, and Mahamandleshwar Swami Shantanand, Pritam Bhawan Udāsīn Ashram Jalandhar, attached to *Naya Akhara*, informed that the *dharmsla* was a religious place of the *Udāsīs* and of the Sikhs; they also provided shelter to the travellers and religious persons who happen to pass by that area.<sup>46</sup>

The *deras*, *Akharas*, *Darbars* and *Gurdwaras* were of considerable size and importance. They mainly consisted of three parts: the residential, the place of worship and the *Samadhs* of the important *Mahants* (attached only to some large centres)." The residential part contained an office of the *Mahant* and several other rooms for the accommodation of inmates and visitors." The large establishments, besides these three

<sup>44</sup> Registered document containing the 'Memorandum: Rules and Regulations of Panchaiti Akhara Bara Udasin', pp. 11,12.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12.

<sup>46</sup> Shankr Das Shri Mahant of Bara Akhara, Kankhal Haridwar, 25-12-08, Mahant Ravinder Das, Dera Bahadurgarh Hoshiarpur 22-04-2007, and Mahamandleshwar Swami Shantanand, Pritam Bhawan Udāsīn Ashram, Naya Akhara, Jalandhar, 12-06 2007.

main buildings have many other rooms attached to it. These rooms serve the purpose of *sarai*, and also to accommodate the religious persons visiting the institutions. Even in the present time, *Adi-Granth* is the part and parcel of their daily religious practice.

Most of the *Udāsī* establishments had been and are still imparting religious education of elementary character. Today many of these establishments have opened up proper schools and some of the establishments are successfully running, even colleges, where the students of the different caste and creed are imparted education. G.W Leitner has given a detailed account of those *Udāsī* establishments which imparted religious education.<sup>47</sup> The *Udāsī* establishments also had separate buildings for *langar* or *sadabarts*, were also attached to some centres.<sup>48</sup> About a half a dozen *Akhara* and *dharmsalas* were well known for running the *langar*.<sup>49</sup>

Some of the main features of the *Udāsī* Organizational structures were that Mahant was its main central authority. The management of the establishment, may it be *dera*, *akhara*, *dharmsala*, *gurdwara*, *asthan*, *temple* or *samadh* was under his sole authority. He was the chief manager, spiritual leader and guide to his disciples and followers. He managed the finances of the institutions and remained head till his death. Every *Mahant* had the right to appoint his successor from the senior most disciples. There had been instances where this hierarchy was ignored. Ganesh Das, the *Mahant* of Sadhu Bela Ashram Haridwar, informed that he had not decided his successor as he did not find any of his present disciple worth his successor. There were certain *deras* where the hierarchy was strictly observed like in case of *Mahant* Som Dass of Beli Ram Ashram who was appointed successor on basis of his seniority. Similarly *Shri Mahant* Shankar Das of Bara Akahar Haridwar was nominated successor on the basis of his being senior *chela*. But the *Mahant* of Sangalwala Akahar Anantanand was nominated due to his dedication and good conduct. As such there was no fixed rule for the nomination of the *Mahant*. *Mahant* of the centre was supposed to follow certain obligations and the main was to remain celibate throughout the period of his discipleship and *Mahantship*. There were also instances of the *chelas* and *Mahants* leading a family life. For example, *Mahant* of Dera Sham Churasi Hoshiarpur is married and both of his sons too are married. Similarly, *Mahant* of Gursharan Udāsīn Dera in village Pharala near Behram in Banga

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<sup>47</sup> G.W. Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in Punjab*, Punjab Languages Department, Patiala 1971, Part II, pp-34, 51-60, 73-89, 100-177.

<sup>48</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *The Udasis Under the Sikh Rule (1750-1850)*, Ph. D. Thesis, p-89.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, p-92.

in district Jalandhar, Harbhajan Das was a married man and his son Rajbir Das too was married. The main task of the *Mahant* was to maintain the institution, manage *langar*, provide food and clothes and accommodation to its inmates. Every institution is supposed to organize Sri Chand *bhandara*. It was also the duty of the *Mahant* to collect money for the maintenance and upkeep of the establishment. Every *Mahant* had varied number of disciples known as *chelas*. On inquiry, to know the whereabouts of the *chelas*, I was informed that most of them joined the institution after leaving their families for one reason or the other and after joining they cut off every kind of link with it. But there were some *chelas* like Shiv anand and Sham Das of Bara Akahara Haridwar who were still maintaining contact with their families. Even young disciples varying in age from twelve to eighteen were seen staying in the centres. The common feature among all the centres was the presence of the cook and the helpers. They are the paid workers of the centres. It was noticed that the room of the *Mahant* and his clothes were managed by his *chelas*. Hierarchy of senior and junior *chelas* was noticed in almost all the establishments. Like *Mahants* these *chelas* were looked after by their subordinates. All the establishments though they were an independent unit in internal organization, management and functioning, but had a common link with one or the other central organization, which acted as parental body and governed all the centres falling under it. All the centres acted as unit under it and collectively united, managed and governed by the central authority. The organizational unity among the *Udāsīs* had developed in the early nineteenth century. The use of the term *Panth* indicated that they had common religious ideology, beliefs and practices. They were spiritually united with Baba Sri Chand revered Guru Nanak recited *Matras*, *Adi-Granth* and ball of ash or *Gola Sahib*. But in unity there were certain stark features which represented diversity existing among different *Udāsīs* providing separate identity to the organization.

## V

The documentary evidence available in the early British revenue records, give the impression that there was no organizational unity amongst the *Udāsīs*. There is no indication of any central body to control and manage their centers. The study of these documents reveals, in fact, a sort of organizational atomism. There is hardly any doubt that the state treated each *Udāsī* centre as an independent unit.

## CHAPTER-V

### BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

*Udāsī* literature written during or before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, contains very meaningful information about *Udāsī* beliefs, ideas and attitudes towards Guru Nanak and his successors as well as their *bani* recorded in *Guru Granth Sahib*. As already mentioned, important among the available works include their expositions of the various compositions of the *Adi Granth*, the *Matras* written or compiled of their own; and their versions of the *Janamsakhis* and *Gurbilases*.<sup>1</sup> The *Udāsī Bodh* compiled by Sant Rein towards the end of Sikh rule, appears in this connection to be more significant than any other available *Udāsī* work. Apart from expressing in detail the views of the *Udāsīs* in the theology and philosophy, it informs us about the early 19<sup>th</sup> century self-image of the *Udāsīs* as well as their popular attitudes, beliefs and practices.<sup>2</sup>

Major R. Leech writing in 1840's an account of the religion of the Sikhs and the sects inhabiting the Punjab, throws considerable light on the *Udāsīs*, their ideas and institutions, their peculiar tenets and practices.<sup>3</sup> Some scattered or casual references to the customs, beliefs and practices of the *Udāsīs* are found in some other contemporary and near-contemporary works, both in English and *Gurmukhi*.<sup>4</sup> Yet the fact remains that much of the information regarding beliefs and practices of the *Udāsīs* can be had only from the *Udāsī* literature, both published and unpublished.

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<sup>1</sup> Udasi works available on the lives of Sikh Gurus and their *bani* include Surat Ram Udasi's, *Ustat Dasan Mebilan Ki*, MS 2300, Sikh History Research Library, Khalsa College, Amritsar; Sant Rein's, *Nanak Vijay Granth*. It can be seen at Balapur Peeth in Akola district of Madhya Pradesh; Sadhu Bela Ashram Sakhar, Sindh; and a printed copy (partially published by Punjabi University Patiala); (MS, Sant Rein Ashram, Bhudan, Tehsil Malerkota, Sangrur); and Sewa Das Udasi's *Parchian* (ed. Hari Singh), Punjab Bhasha Vibhag, Patiala 1978. The *Matras* of the Udasis are found attributed to Sri Chand, Almast, Balu Hasna and Bhagat Bhagwan in *Matre Baba Sri Chand* (MS 75, Rare Book Section, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar); Commentaries on the *Bani* of the Sikh Gurus written around 1800 A.D. include Anand Ghan Udasi's *Gurbani Tike* on *Japuji*, *Siddh Ghosht*, *Anand* and *Asa Di Var*, Rattan Singh Jaggi (ed.), Punjab Bhasha Vibhag, Patiala 1970; Parmanand Udasi's *Japuji Satik* in Hindi in the 1850; Amar Das Udasi wrote *Maniprabha*, a commentary on Sukhamani; *Bhai Mani Singh Wali Janamsakhi* has been proved to be an Udasi work : Surjit Singh Hans, "Early Sikh Tradition", *Journal Of Regional History*, Vol. I, 1980, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, ff 319 ab. It was compiled in 1858 by Sant Rein, an eminent Udasi poet of the Sikh times. It is a Braj work, written in *Gurmukhi* script in verse. It consists of thirty two chapters, containing 2, 520 *slokas*.

<sup>3</sup> "Notes on the Religion of the Sikhs and Other Sects inhabiting the Punjab", *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, 20 December 1845, No. 144.

<sup>4</sup> Notably among these are the works of H.H. Wilson, M.A., Sherring, Lepel H. Griffin; Ibbetson, MacLagan and Gaini Gian Singh.



Significantly, it may also be underlined that much of the existing *Udāsī* literature was written in the twentieth century after 1920's, primarily due to the Akali *Udāsī* conflict for the purpose and control of the management of the Sikh Shrines.

The *Udāsīs* showed great reverence for Baba Nanak and his followers, the *Nanak Panthis*, and the *Adi Granth*. They did chant *Kirtan Sohila*, the *Japuji* and the *Rehras* of the *orthodox* Sikhs. They also chanted *Matras* of Sri Chand, along with compositions of Kabir, Mira Bai and Surdas. But for salvation they preferred Hindu *Margas* of *Gyan*, *Karma* and *Bhakti*.<sup>5</sup> The Practice of keeping the *Granth Sahib* in *Udāsī* institutions was a common practice.<sup>6</sup> The *Udāsīs* had an exceptional regard for Baba Sri Chand and Baba Gurditta, who were believed to have passed on Guruship to the *adi-Udāsīs* : Almast, Balu Hasna, Goinda and Phul.<sup>7</sup> Sant Rein is of the view that *Sankadik* (the four *sans* of Brahma) appeared before Baba Gurditta at Kiratpur and the latter adopted them as his disciples and renamed them.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, notwithstanding their reverence for Guru Nanak and the *Adi Granth*, the *Udāsīs* did not believe in the orthodox Sikh doctrine of the spiritual unity of the ten Sikh Gurus or the unity of Guruship. They subscribed to a principle of gnosis. By implication they believed that any *Udāsī* who 'experienced' God was as good as the Gurus. This is evident from the *Gyan-Ratnavali*, popularly attributed to Bhai Mani Singh but recently proved to be an *Udāsī* work of the period of Sikh rule.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, ff 309 ab; ff 310a, ff 1-320; H.H. Wilson, "Civil and Religious institutions of the Sikhs", *The Sikh Religion : A Symposium* (1958), 55; Major R. Leech, "Notes on the Religion of the Sikhs and other Sects inhabiting the Punjab"; *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, 20 December 1845, No. 144.

<sup>6</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 30 April 1852, No. 100, cases 20, 25 and 32; *ibid*, 27 May 1853, No. 202, case 37; Also see, *Settlement Report, Ludhiana*, 1878-83, 60-61; G.W. Lietner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, Part I, Languages Department, Patiala 1970 (reprint), p. 32.

<sup>7</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, f 309<sup>b</sup>:

ਪਹਲਾ ਬਾਲੂ ਹਸਨਾ ਜਾਨ ॥  
ਦੂਜਾ ਪੁਨਿ ਅਲਮਸਤਿ ਮਹਾਨ ॥  
ਤੀਜਾ ਗੋਇੰਦ ਜਾਨ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥  
ਚੌਥਾ ਫੂਲ ਸੁ ਚਾਰ ਉਚਾਰੇ ॥ ੨੩ ॥

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, ff 307<sup>b</sup> and 308<sup>a</sup>:

ਬਾਬਾ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ॥  
ਕੀਰਤਿਪੁਰ ਮੇ ਥੇ ਸੋ ਭਾਈ ॥ 9 ॥  
ਸਨਕਾਦਿਕ ਚਾਰੋ ਤਹ ਆਏ ॥  
ਮਹਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਪਠਾਏ ॥

*Ibid*, f. 309<sup>b</sup> : ... ..

ਚੋਪਾਈ॥ ਬਾਬੇ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੇ ਸੋ ਚਾਰੇ ।  
ਚੇਲੇ ਕਰੇ ਸੋ ਆਪ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥  
ਤਿਨਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਅਉਰ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਖੇ ॥  
ਪੂਰਨ ਕਰੀ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਅਭਿਲਾਖੇ ॥ 22 ॥

<sup>9</sup> Surjit Singh Hans, "Early Sikh Tradition", *Journal Of Regional History*, Vol. I, 185 and his *Historical Analysis of Sikh Literature*, Ph. D. Thesis, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar 1980, pp. 348, 351-52, 505.

Bhai Gurdas's reference to the *dehra* established by Sri Chand and his followers at Kartarpur, (Dera Baba Nanak) after the death of his father, Guru Nanak, also shows their rejection of the principle of nomination to succession.<sup>10</sup>

Not only in their outward appearance and practices but also is their basic beliefs, the *Udāsīs* appear to have been heterodox.<sup>11</sup> In his doctoral work on *Udāsīs* entitled *The Udāsīs Under the Sikh Rule (1780-1850 AD)*, Sulakhan Singh has clearly high-lighted the *Udāsīs* as heterodox in terms of their doctrine and practices viz-a-viz the mainstream Sikhism.<sup>12</sup> He writes “The *Udāsīs* were clearly heterodox in terms of both doctrine and practice. Moreover, they were not even uniform in their outward appearance, dietary habits, and their objects and modes of worship”.<sup>13</sup>

The object of *bhakti* for the *Udāsīs* was the ‘Supreme Reality’. They believed that without ‘love’ and *Bhaye of Brahm*, *Bhakti* was not possible and without *bhakti* knowledge of God (*gyan*) and salvation (*Mukti*) was impossible.<sup>14</sup> In this context the *Udāsīs* emphasized the importance of *Bhakti*.<sup>15</sup> The combination of *Bhakti* and *Gyan*

<sup>10</sup> Giani Hazara Singh (ed), *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, Var 26, Pauri 33; Also see, J.S. Grewal “Dissent in Early Sikhism”, *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala 1980, pp. 110 and 114.

ਬਾਲਜਤੀ ਹੈ ਸਿਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਬਾਬਾਣਾ ਦੇਹਰਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ।

<sup>11</sup> Surjit Singh Hans, *Historical Analysis of Sikh literature*, pp. 348-52, 411, 415, 505; Sulakhan Singh, “The Udasīs in the early Nineteenth Century” *Journal Of Regional History*, p.39.

<sup>12</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *The Udāsīs Under the Sikh Rule (1780-1850 AD)*, p. 91.

<sup>13</sup> Sulakhan Singh, “Udasi Beliefs and Practices”, *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. IV, 1983, p.81; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, “Literary Evidence on the Udasīs: Sant Rein’s *Udasi Bodh*”, *Indian History Congress*, Burdwan, 1983., pp. 292-297.

<sup>14</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 127<sup>b</sup>, 128<sup>a</sup> and 94<sup>a</sup>:

ਭਾਵ ਨਹੀ ਜਿਨ ਕੇ ਉਰ ਮੈ ਤਿਨ ਕੋ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਮਿਲੇ ਕਹੁ ਕੈਸੇ ।  
ਭਾਵ ਅਹੇ ਜਿਨ ਕੇ ਉਰ ਮੈ ਤਿਨ ਕੋ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਮਿਲੈ ਬਿਨ ਪੈਸੇ ।

... ..  
ਨਹਿ ਜਹਾ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਤਹਾ ਭਗਤੀ ਜਹਾ ਗਿਆਨ ।  
ਘਯਾਨ ਜਹਾ ਸਾਂਤੀ ਤਹਾ ਕਹਯੋ ਆਪ ਭਗਵਾਨ ॥

... ..  
ਸੁਰਧਾਭਾਭ ਸੁ ਜਾਨਿਯੋ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾ ਬੀਜ ॥  
ਭਗਵਤਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਜਘਤਮੈ ਆਹਿ ਵੱਡੀ ਇੱਕ ਚੀਜ ॥

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 4<sup>b</sup>, 5<sup>a</sup>, 68<sup>ab</sup>, 82<sup>a</sup>, 88<sup>a</sup>, 92<sup>b</sup> and 93<sup>b</sup>:

ਭਗਵਤਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਬਿਨ ਦੁਖ ਪਾਵਹਿ ।  
ਜਨਮੇ ਮਰੈ ਸੁ ਬਾਰਮਬਾਰੇ ।

... ..  
ਭਗਤੀ ਜਣੇ ਗਯਾਨ ਬੈਰਾਗ ।  
ਭਗਤੀ ਤੇ ਜਾਗੇ ਤਹਿ ਭਾਗ ॥

... ..  
ਬਿਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਬੈਰੁਨ ਨ ਮਿਲੈ ॥

... ..  
ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਬਿਨ ਗਯਾਨ ਨਾ ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਬੇਦ ਇਮ ਭਾਖੇ ਦੋਇ ॥  
ਗਿਆਨ ਬੈਰਾਗ ਭਗਤੀ ਕੇ ਪੂਤ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਇਮ ਭਾਖੇ ਸੂਤ ॥

... ..  
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਤੱਤ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ ।

was perhaps a peculiar idea of the *Udāsīs*.<sup>16</sup> But this did not minimize the importance of the *Guru*,<sup>17</sup> rather *Guru* got precedence over the *Vedas*.<sup>18</sup> Once acquired, *gyan* was never lost.<sup>19</sup> The grace of *Guru*, was perhaps more than the grace of God, in attaining *Gyan*.<sup>20</sup>

Both Brahmanand and Randhir Singh are in agreement about the use of *Guru Granth Sahib* by nearly all the *Udāsīs*.<sup>21</sup> According to Randhir Singh, this was a proof of their being Sikhs. Brahmand, however, argued that, *Granth Sahib* was used

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ਬਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਨਹੀ ਛੁਟਕਾਰਾ ॥  
ਬਿਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਨ ਮਿਲੇ ॥  
ਇਹ ਤੁਮ ਬਾਤ ਰੱਖੋ ਸਿਖ ਦਿਲੇ ॥

... ..  
ਭਗਤੀ ਬਿਨ ਮੋਖ ਨਹੀ ਕਲਪਾਤਿ ਸਿਧਾਤਿ ॥  
ਹਰੀ ਇਮ ਆਪ ਉਚਾਰੇ ॥

<sup>16</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 11<sup>a</sup> and 313<sup>b</sup>:

ਗਯਾਨ ਪੰਥ ਅਬ ਕਹਿਤ ਹੋ ਸੁਨੋ ਸੰਤ ਮਨ ਲਾਇ ॥  
ਜਿਸ ਕੋ ਪੜਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਸਮਝਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੀਵ ਪਰਮ ਪਦ ਪਾਇ ॥

... ..  
ਗਯਾਨਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸ ਪਾਨ ਜੁ ਕਰੇ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀ ਤਰੇ । 54 ।

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, f. 230<sup>b</sup>:

ਗਯਾਨ ਸੋ ਆਹਿ ਦੋਇ ਪਰਕਾਰ ॥  
ਇਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਇਕ ਬੇਦ ਨੁਸਾਰ ॥  
ਬੇਦ ਨੁਸਾਰ ਗਯਾਨ ਹੋ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਬੇਦ ਪੜੇ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਅਨੁਭਵ ਗਯਾਨ ਆਹਿ ਜੋ ਆਪਤਿ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ॥

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, f. 231<sup>b</sup>:

ਉਤਮ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਗਯਾਨ ਮੱਧਮ ਬਰੇਦ ਕਾ ।  
... ..  
ਅਨੁਭਵ ਜਿਸ ਕੋ ਗਯਾਨ ਭਯੋ ਸੁ ਜਾਨਿਯੈ ।  
ਗਯੋ ਬੇਦ ਦੇ ਪਾਰ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ਮਹਾਨਿਯੈ ।  
ਬੇਦਗਯਾ ਦੇ ਅਗੇ ਗਯਾਨੀ ਗਯੋ ਸੋ ।  
ਹੋ ! ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਗਯਾਨੀ ਭਯੋ ਸੋ ।

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 87<sup>b</sup> and 88<sup>a</sup>:

ਗਯਾਨ ਕਲਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਸ ਨ ਹੋਇ ।  
ਸੰਤ ਬੇਦ ਇਮੁ ਭਾਖੈ ਦੋਇ ।

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 87<sup>a</sup> and 230<sup>b</sup>:

ਹੈ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਜਿਸ ਪਰ ਭਗਵਾਨ ।  
ਤਿਸ ਕੋ ਦੇਵੇ ਅਪਨਾ ਗਿਆਨ ।  
ਗਯਾਨ ਭਯੋ ਭਗਵਤਿ ਕਾ ਜਾਹਿ ।  
ਭਯੋ ਸੁ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਜਗਤਿ ਕੇ ਮਾਹਿ ।  
... ..  
ਅਨੁਭਵ ਗਯਾਨ ਆਹਿ ਜੋ ਆਪਤਿ ।  
ਗੁਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ।

<sup>21</sup> Pandit Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 62; Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, p. 56

to propagate the ideas of the *Vedas*.<sup>22</sup> He tried to prove that the *Udāsīs* were not Sikhs. They both refer to several practices and dress code.<sup>23</sup> It is quite certain from this literary evidence, as also from contemporary evidence, that the *Udāsīs* did not conform to any single pattern. Multiplicity of religious practices was in use. All *Udāsī mahants* were not celibate either.

Indeed, besides the line of succession from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, which was a nominal succession given to orthodox Sikh belief, the *Udāsīs* believed in a parallel, independent line of succession to the *gaddi* of Guru Nanak. They traced their spiritual links to Baba Sri Chand, through Baba Gurditta and the *adi-Udāsīs* of the four *Dhuans* in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, till the line reached the living *Mahants*.<sup>24</sup> Writing towards the close of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Kesar Singh Chibbar makes reference to the *darbars*, or the two lines of succession, that of the Sikh Gurus and that of Sri Chand and his followers.<sup>25</sup> The *Udāsīs* made certain claims which are historically difficult to

<sup>22</sup> Pandit Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 162.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 547-48; Also see, Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan Di Vithia*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>24</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, f 312<sup>b</sup> and 313<sup>a</sup>:

ਚੋਪਾਈ॥— ਪੰਥ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਹੇ ਯੋ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਬਿਰਛਿ ਰੂਪ ਕਰਿ ਬਰਨੈ ਸੋਇ ॥  
ਪੰਥ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਹੇ ਯੋ ਜੋਇ ।  
ਸਰਗੁਨਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਛਾਨੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ 49 ॥

... ..  
ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਤਾਹਿ ਬੀਜ ਸੁ ਜਾਨੈ ।  
ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਹ ਪਛਾਨੈ ॥ 50 ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਅੰਗਦ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਪੁਤਰ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਭਏ ਸੋ ਦੋਇ ॥  
ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਬਾਬਾ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤਾ ॥  
ਡਾਲੇ ਭਏ ਸੁ ਦੋਇ ਪਵਿੱਤਾ ॥ 51 ॥  
ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਗੁਰ ਧੁੰਨੀ ਚਾਰ ।  
ਉਪਡਾਲੇ ਤਹ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਿਚਾਰ ॥  
ਸੁਥਰੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੁਨਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਹਾਨੇ ॥  
ਸੇਵਾਪੰਥੀ ਅਉਰ ਦਬਾਨੇ ॥ 52 ॥  
ਸਾਖਾ ਪਰਣ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਸੋਇ ॥  
ਯਾਹਿ ਵਿਖੈ ਸੰਸਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਗ੍ਰੰਥਿਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਹੋ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਫਲ ਅਰ ਪੁਸਪ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ 53 ॥  
ਨਾਮੁ ਗਯਾਨ ਬਾਣੀ ਮੇ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਰਸੁ ਸੁਰੰਧ ਤੁਮ ਜਾਨੈ ਸੋਇ ॥  
ਗਯਾਨਾਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸ ਪਾਨ ਜੁ ਕਰੇ ।  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਤਰੇ ॥ 54 ॥  
ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਬਿਰਛਿ ਫਿਰ ਭਯੋ ।  
ਬਧਤਾ ਬਧਤਾ ਬਧ ਸੋ ਗਯੋ ॥

<sup>25</sup> *Bansavalinama Dasan Patshahian ka* (ed.), Rattan Singh Jaggi, p. 22.

ਦੋ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਲਗੇ ਲਗਣਿ, ਇਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਦੇ  
ਦੂਜੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਦੇ ਸੰਗਤਾ ਵਗਨ । 76 ।

uphold. Sant Rein has made an attempt to misinterpret history of the Sikh Gurus. For instance, they believed that Gurditta succeeded his father Guru Hargobind as the 7<sup>th</sup> Guru of the Sikhs and in turn nominated his son, Har Rai, the 7<sup>th</sup> Sikh Guru, as his successor.<sup>26</sup> It appears, therefore, that the *Udāsīs* were averse to certain fundamental beliefs of orthodox Sikhism.

G.S. Ghurye writes that like *Kabirpanthis* and *Dadupanthis* among *Vaishnavas*, the *Udāsīs* and *Nirmalas* were in origin a reaction of synthesis to the impact of Islam. Though they were not opposed to idol-worship root and branch, yet the importance they gave to *Guru Granth Sahib* is not only a direct testimony to their *Nanak Sahi* affiliation but also a clear reflection of the imitation of the Islamic *Quran*. The selection of the combination of five Hindu deities, namely *Shiva*, *Vishnu*, Sun, Goddess *Durga* and *Ganpati*, by the *Udāsīs* also stamp them as reformists. It was an attempt to bypass bickerings and strifes over particular deities *Shiva*, *Vishnu* etc. The *Udāsīs* considered themselves *Srautas*, the followers of *Sruti*; and worshipped the ‘*Pancayatana*’, combination of five deities.<sup>27</sup>

To differentiate themselves from other *Sanyasis*, their literature makes the rather curious statement that begging for alms and putting an ochre - coloured

<sup>26</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, ff 305ab, 306a, and 306<sup>b</sup>:

ਸਲੋਕ ॥ ਬੰਗੁਲਾ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਾਇ ਕੇ ਜਾਇ ਕਹਾਯ ਤਿਨ ਆਪ ।  
ਪਯੋ ਤਿਆਰ ਸੋ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਤਵ ਪਰਤਾਪ । 53 ।  
ਦੇਸ ਬੰਗਲੇ ਕੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਹਿ ਗੁਬਿੰਦ ਜਹ ਨਾਮ ।  
ਤਿਸ ਪਰ ਭਏ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਸੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਰੁਣਾ ਧਾਮ । 54 ।  
ਚੋਪਈ॥ ਨਿਜ ਸਮਰਥਾ ਜੋਇ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ॥  
ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੇ ਕੋ ਦਯੋ ਸੁ ਆਪ ॥  
ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਕੀ ਪਦਵੀ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੇ ਕੋ ਬਖਸੀ ਸੋਇ ॥ 55 ॥  
ਅਪਨੇ ਸਮਗੁਰ ਤਾਹਿ ਬਣਾਯੋ ॥  
ਦੀਵੇ ਤੇ ਜਨ ਦੀਵਾ ਲਾਯੋ ॥  
ਦੋਨੋ ਦੀਪਕ ਹੋਇ ਸਮਾਨੇ ॥  
ਤੈਸੇ ਭਏ ਸੁ ਦੋਇ ਮਹਾਨੇ ॥ 56 ।  
ਬਾਬੇ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੇ ਗੁਰਆਈ ।  
ਨਿਜ ਬੇਟੇ ਕੋ ਦਈ ਸੁ ਭਾਈ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ਗੁਰੂ ਭਯੋ ॥  
ਹਰਿ ਗੁਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰ ਨਿਜ ਪੁਰਿ ਰਾਯੋ ॥ 57 ॥  
... ..  
ਚੋਪਈ॥ ਬਾਬੇ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੇ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ॥  
ਨਿਜ ਬੇਟੇ ਕੋ ਦਈ ਸੁ ਭਾਈ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ਕੋ ਬਖਸੀ ਗਾਈ ॥  
ਬਾਬੇ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੇ ਸਤਿਬਾਦੀ ॥ 59 ॥

<sup>27</sup> G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus*, Popular Prakashan Bombay, 1964 (first ed. 1953), pp. 142, 143

garments are the *Udāsīs* speciality as opposed to the staff-carrying of the *Smarta Sanyasis* (worshippers of siva).<sup>28</sup>

The Philosophy of the *Udāsī* ascetics is the same monistic *Vedanta* as that of the *Dasnamis*. Whenever there was any discussion on the *Vaishanva* ascetics, the *Udāsīs* favoured the *Saiva Sadhus*.<sup>29</sup>

The *Udāsīs* did not believe in the dual Sikh doctrine of *Guru-Granth* and the *Guru-Panth* or that Guruship was vested in the *Panth* and the *Granth* after Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>30</sup> Though the *Udāsī* interpretation of Sikhism was *Vedantic*, they were not averse to the idea of the *Guru-Granth*, which helped the ruling classes more than the idea of the *Guru-Panth*.<sup>31</sup> The author of the *Gyan-Ratnavali* sets aside even the idea of *Guru-Granth*<sup>32</sup> Instead, he harps on the idea of *Sabad* being God.

Notwithstanding the reverence shown to the sacred Sikh scripture, the *Udāsīs* believed in the *Vedas*, the *Puranas* and the *Shastras*. In addition, they had their *Matras*, attributed to Sri Chand, Almast, Balu Hasna and Bhagat Bhagwan. These *Matras* expound their code of conduct, the way in which they were supposed to live, emphasizing the qualities of the inner-self rather than the formal outward symbols.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus*, pp. 142-143.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>30</sup> Sulakhan Singh “The Udasis in the Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century” *Journal Of Regional History*, pp.35-42.

<sup>31</sup> J.S. Grewal, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, pp. 100-06; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, “The Udasis in the Early Nineteenth Century”, *ournal Of Regional History*, pp. 35-42.

<sup>32</sup> Surjit Singh Hans, *Historical Analysis of the Sikh Literature* (1500-1850 A.D.), pp. 348, 352 and 415; *Udasi Bodh*; f. 239b:

ਬੇਦਵਾਕ ਮਹਾ ਗੂੜ ਸਮਝਿ

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*; f 317b;

*Matra Baba Sri Chand*, MS No. 75, ff, 516-517 ab., Rare book section Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; For details of *Matras* (see chapter Literature of the *Udāsīs* ).

ੴ ਗੁਰ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ਖੇਲ ਰਚਾਇਆ । (f.੫੧੬)

ਅਗਮ ਨਿਗਮ ਕਾ ਪੰਥ ਬਤਾਇਆ ॥ 1 ॥

ਗਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਗੋਦੜੀ ਖਿਮਾਂ ਕੀ ਟੋਪੀ । (f.੫੧੬)

ਜਤ ਦਾ ਆੜਬੰਦ ਸ਼ੀਲ ਲੰਗੋਟੀ ॥ 2 ॥

ਅਕਾਲ ਖਿੰਬਾ ਨਿਰਾਸ ਝੋਲੀ । (f.੫੧੬)

ਜੁਗਤ ਕਾ ਟੋਪ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਬੋਲੀ ॥ 3 ॥

ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਚੋਲਾ ਸਤ ਕੀ ਸੋਲੀ । (f.੫੧੬)

ਮਤਰਯਾਦ ਮੇਖਲੀ ਲੈ ਗਲੇ ਮੋਲੀ ॥ 4 ॥

ਧਿਆਨ ਕਾ ਬਟੂਆ ਨਿਰਤ ਕਾ ਸੂਈ ਦਾਨ । (f.੫੧੬)

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅੰਚਲਾ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਸੂਜਾਨ ॥ 5 ॥

ਬਹੁ ਰੰਗ ਮੋਰ ਛੜ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਦਿਸ਼ਟੀ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਨਿਰਭਉ ਜੰਗ ਡੋਰਾ ਨਾ ਕੋ ਦਸ਼ਟੀ ॥ 6 ॥

ਜਾਪ ਜੰਗੋਟਾ ਸਿਫਤ ਉਡਾਨੀ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਸਿੰਝੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਗੁਰੁਬਾਣੀ ॥ 7 ॥

ਸ਼ਰਮ ਕੀ ਮੁੰਦ੍ਰਾ, ਸਿਵ ਵਿਭੂਤਾ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਾਨੀ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੂਤਾ ॥ 8 ॥

ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸੂਤ ਵਿਵੇਕ ਧਾਗੇ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਅਨੇਕ ਟੱਲੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਲਾਗੇ । 9 ॥

Their attempt to equate the *Matras* of Sri Chand with the *Japuji* of Guru Nanak in spiritual power clearly shows their being heterodox.<sup>34</sup> Their versions of the *Janamsakhis* and *Gurbilases*, reveal their unorthodoxy. In this connection, we may refer to the *Gyan Ratnavali* attributed to Bhai Mani Singh and to Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas Dasvin Patshahi*.<sup>35</sup> The *Udāsīs* even stake their claim to the earliest extant copy of the *Adi Granth* as their own book.<sup>36</sup>

In *Udāsī Bodh*, they gave their own exposition of their origins and background, apart from explaining their views on concepts like *Dukh*, *Pap*, *Pun*, *Karam*, *Vairag*, *Brahm*, *Narak*, *Swarg*, the five *kosh*, the evils and the creation of the world.<sup>37</sup>

In their initiation ceremony, the *Udāsīs* differed from the Sikhs. The novice was supposed to drink the water in which the toes of five *Udāsī Mahants* were washed; he was to follow the instructions of Baba Sri Chand and to wear *bhagven* or salmon-coloured clothes. He was also told to avoid two temptations : gold and women.<sup>38</sup> His name was changed, and the new name generally ended with *Das* or *Brahm*.<sup>39</sup> At the end of the ceremony, the sweetmeat called *halva* was distributed among those present.<sup>40</sup> *Charan Sadh ke Dho Dho Peeo, arp Sadh Ko apna jeo*.<sup>41</sup> The spirit being a complete dedication to the *Guru* after being initiated. At the time of initiation if a novitiate is ordained a *Naga* or a naked ascetic, he is given a name which ends in *Dasa* or *Sarana*, suffixes which are otherwise peculiar to the *Vaishnava*

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ਸੁਰਤ ਕੀ ਸੁਈ ਲੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੀਵੇ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਜੋ ਰਖੇ ਸੋ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਥੀਵੇ ॥ 10 ॥

ਸਾਹ ਸੁਪੈਦ, ਜਰਦ ਸੁਰਖਾਈ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਜੋ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਭਾਈ ॥ 11 ॥

Also See, *Udasi Bodh*, 310 :

ਗੁਰ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ਖੇਲ ਰਚਾਇਆ । (f.੫੧੬)

ਅਗਮ ਨਿਗਮ ਕਾ ਪੰਥ ਬਤਾਇਆ ॥ 1 ॥

ਏਹ ਮਾਤਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਖਾਈ ॥

ਸਿਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਭਾਈ ॥

<sup>34</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, f 310 a:

ਜਪ ਸਮ ਮਾਤਾ ਹੈ ਯੇ ਸੋਇ। ਯਾਹਿ ਵਿਖੇ ਸੰਸਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ । 34।

<sup>35</sup> S. S. Hans, *Historical Analysis of Sikh Literature* (1500-1850 A.D.), pp. 346-48, 352, 411, 415, 503-04.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 415.

<sup>37</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858 A.D., ff 1-320; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, "Self-Image of the Udasis in Sant Rein's *Udasi Bodh*", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, 22<sup>nd</sup> session 1988, pp. 117-22.

<sup>38</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, p. 1272; and *Census of India*, 1911, Part I, Vol. XIV, p. 117.

<sup>39</sup> *Census of India*, 1911, Part I, Vol XIV, p. 117

<sup>40</sup> M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes* (as represented in Banares), Vol I, Trubner and Co., 1872, p. 268

<sup>41</sup> Parshuram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat Ki Sant Parampra*, p. 361

*Bairagis*. If the initiation is for the *Paramahansa* variety, the disciple receives a name which ends in *Ananda*.<sup>42</sup>

When Almast was asked by a *Nath* that what kind of clothes the *Udāsīs* wear, he answered “*Shah, Sufaid, Zard, Surkhai, Jo Le Pahere so Gurbhai*”. Means ‘*Shah*’ (a Persian word meaning a *sadhu*), or a *sadhu* who wears white, *Bhagwa* (ochre), and *Surkh* (red) clothes is an *Udāsī*.<sup>43</sup> In the beginning *Udāsī Sadhus* used to wear less clothes to cover the body. To protect themselves from winter they used to lit fire or *dhuni*. The smoke or fire acted as an indicator of their presence.

When Bhai Gurdas in his Var 1/24 writes ‘ਬਾਬੇ ਭੇਖ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਕੀ ਰੀਤ ਚਲਾਈ’ he means, that Baba (Nanak) changed his attire and looked like *Udāsī*. He also wanted that this new look should not be mistaken as a Sikh. To make this clear he further wrote.

ਫਿਰ ਬਾਬਾ ਆਇਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰਿ  
ਭੇਖ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਗਲ ਉਤਾਰਾ। ਵਾਰ 1/3।

When Baba Nanak came back from his religious journey to Kartarpur, he once again changed his attire (took off the *Udāsī* attire). From the old paintings of Guru Nanak, it looks that Guru Nanak used to wear *seli* and *topi* and ochre coloured clothes but when he came and settled down, he shifted to ordinary (white) clothes. On the other hand, the paintings of Sri Chand present him in naked form. He is shown having long hair, without beard and mustaches (clean shaven)<sup>44</sup>, loin clothes (*Kopin*) and *seli* on the body. On the way to Pilibhit, Guru Hargobind came across Swami Ram Das, who presented Guru Hargobind his *Jaap Maal* and ochre coloured clothes. When Almast was given the charge of centre of Pilibhit, he was presented the same gifts by Guru Hargobind which he had received from Swami Ram Das. As such the usage of the ochre clothes in *Udāsī Samparda* was started by Swami Ram Das. By ‘ਉਦਾਸੀ ਰੀਤ’ Bhai Gurdas means the use of ochre coloured clothes by Guru Nanak. Sri Chand was not at all considerate about clothes and he remained naked except for *Kopin*. What kind of clothes Baba Gurditta, a house holder, wore are not known.

<sup>42</sup> G.S. Gurye, *Indian Sadhus*, p. 144.

<sup>43</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, MS* No. 75, ff 517ab; Also see, Swami Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chandra Ji Ki Matra Steek*, Sakhar Sindh, 1941, p. 32

The present incumbent of Dera Guru Ram Rai or Dera Maru Das, Alawalpur district Jalandhar, *Mahant* Piara Das and the present incumbent of Bahadurpur Dera in Hoshiarpur, *Mahant* Raminder Das, in a personal interview on 21 June, 2008 supported the same view that even if commonly Ochre colour is worn but *Udāsīs* are permitted to wear any of these four colours i.e. *Shah* (black), *Sufaid* (White), *Zarad* (Bhagve or Ochre) and *Surkh* (red).

<sup>44</sup> Mohinder Kaur, *Baba Sri Chand Te Udasi Mat*, Navyug Publisher, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 107, 108.



According to Mohinder Kaur, Guru Hargobind, the 6<sup>th</sup> Guru started the system of wearing ochre coloured clothes among the *Udāsīs* and it continues till date. If other *Udāsīs* (besides Sri Chand) were wearing clothes it is not much known to us and even if they were wearing clothes they were not particular about the colour of clothes. On my personal visit to Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar and many other *Udāsī* establishments, I noticed that generally the *Udāsīs* wore ochre or white coloured clothes so much so, that the uniform of Swami Sant Das School, attached to the Pritam Bhawan Udāsīn Ashram, Jalandhar, is also saffron coloured. It is important to understand and look into the beliefs, practices and social contribution which the *Udāsīs* have made to the society rather than their attire. They cover their head with *topi* (cap) or *pagri* (turban). In summers the cap is made of cotton cloth and in winters *Mahants* wore woolen cap. They also wear *seli* (*mala* or necklace) of black colour and *majithi chola*.

Generally *Sadhus* are of three types : *Grahist*, who are householders, wear *Gerua* clothes and are holders of some *Gaddis*. Secondly, those who are not householders and who appoint their successor before death. Thirdly, *nirvan sadhus* who don't wear *Gerua* clothes, rather wear *Langoti*, smear *Bhasm* and keep long *Jata*.<sup>45</sup> Pandit Brahmanand Udasin in *Udasin Mat Darpan* also refers to those *Udāsīs* who get married as '*Sant Udāsī*' and those who never get married as '*Sadhu Udāsī*'.<sup>46</sup>

The new entrant would drink *charanamats*, tie *langot*, given ash bath, put a *tilak*, given *seli* (*mala*) *pagri* (*topi*, turban or head gear) and *Brahmanchal* (cloth), *Guru mantra* by his *guru*, some hair of head were shorn, made to recite *Shri Chandra Mantra* and *Guru Pranali*, gets a new name with his new birth (as his parents and family relations exist no more). He now was thanks the gathering and other *Mahants*, he is served *Prasad* and *Bhagwa* cloth to wear through out his life. A *Bhandara* is held in the name of Sri Chandra and *Rot Prasad* is served to the new entrants. They were made to bow to *Dhuan* and *Samads*. Even the *grahist* members could also join *Udāsī* sect and were known, as '*Sewak*'. After the function was over these '*Sewaks*' were served *Prasad* only.<sup>47</sup> The new entrants were to recite *Onkar* along with *Vedas*. They are of two types: *Nirvan* and *Paramhans*.<sup>48</sup> *Nirvan* keep long hair (*Jatadhari*) put ash on their body, use *seli*, *topi*, *toomba*, *band*, *mrigchala* (deer hide),

<sup>45</sup> Sacchidanand Sharma, *Udasi sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, p. 45.

<sup>46</sup> Brahmanand Udasin, *Udasin Mat Darpan*, p. 107

<sup>47</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 52.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

*Gola Sahib, Chipi, Kopin, Mekhala* and use *dhuni*. They keep travelling from one place to another, make disciples and preach teachings of *Udāsī* sect. Paramhans adopt *Kopin* and go about naked. They do not carry *danda*, *Kamandal* and clothes. Nothing like sorrow or happiness disturbs them. Even wearing clothes or taking bath becomes immaterial. They believe in existence of soul in every living being. *Udāsī Sants* are of two types: *Chaturthasharmi* and *Grahist*. *Chaturthasharmi* are further of six types : *Kuteechak* (are of 3 kinds : those who reside in *Kutia*, *Snandhari* and *Mathadhish*). *Bahudak*, *Hans*, *Paramhans*, *Avdhut*, *Turiyateet*.<sup>49</sup>

There were no distinct restrictions on hair. Some wore it long as matted, others kept short. The matted hair symbolized their renunciation of worldly life and comforts. They may go to the extent of remaining naked and smear ash on their bodies, again symbolizing their death to the world of family relations, business and caste.

The *Udāsīs* are known to have worshipped the idol of Sri Chand and the *samadhs* of their *Mahants*, in addition to the *Adi-Granth*, the Hindu scriptures and the idols of *Shiva* or *Vishnu*.<sup>50</sup> They also worshipped *Charanpadika* and *Nishan Sahib*.<sup>51</sup> The practice of worshipping the ball of ash (*gole di Puja*) was popular among the *Udāsī* followers of *Sangat Sahib* and the *nanga Udāsī* followers of *Pritam Das*.<sup>52</sup> The *Udāsīs* recited some selected *chbandas* or couplets from their own *Satotar* or *Panch Parmeshar* immediately after their daily evening *Aarti*, or the waving of the lamps, was over.<sup>53</sup>

The *nath* influence is evident in some of the *Udāsī* ideas, customs and beliefs. They accorded a particular loyalty to the doctrines and practices of the *hatha-yoga*, although the respect for these doctrines extended beyond the limited *Udāsī* circle.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Math*; here students were trained and educated in *Udasi* culture. Special consideration was taken in selecting *Mahants* of these *Maths*. Only those who were honest, simple cultured, gentle, noble, far sighted, well versed in teachings and who had a complete control over emotions were selected as *Mahants*; Jagannatha Sharma, *Udasi Samparda Ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 48, 49, 53; Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chandra Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>50</sup> The *Udasi Sadhs* living in the *akbara* of Balanand in the Amritsar city were known as *Shivdoo Fakirs*, perhaps because of their allegiance to the Hindu God Shiva: *Foreign / Political Proceedings*, 27 May 1853, No. 219, Case 5.

<sup>51</sup> Pandit Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Daarpan*, 1923, p. 86.

<sup>52</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, pp. 1278 and 1283.

<sup>53</sup> *Mahant Mukat Ram Giani and Kaviraj Ram Das Vaid* (ed), *Sri Sant Rein Granthavali* (containing Sant Rein's *Man Parbodh* and *Anbhai Amrit Sagar*), Sri Sant Rein Ashram Bhudan Malerkotla, Pepsu (Punjab), 1953, pp. 4-5.

<sup>54</sup> W.H. Meleod, *Early Sikh Tradition, A study of the Janamsakhis*, Clearendon, Press, Oxford 1980, p. 103; Swami. Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chandra Ji Ki Matra Steek*, p. 33; Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, ff 309 (a).

The practice of constructing simple hearths (*dhuni* or *dhuan*) was a *nath* practice which had been appropriated by the *Udāsī sadhus* and subsequently the word *dhuan* was extended to designate *Udāsī* establishment.<sup>55</sup> Significantly, the practice of *dhuni* or continuous smouldering fire was an integral feature of the earliest known *Udāsī* centers termed as four *Dhuans*. Their practice of *dhuni* or continuous fire and belief in doctrines and practices of *hatha yoga* clearly indicate their unorthodoxy.

*Udāsīs* believed in the unity of *brahm*.<sup>56</sup> They believed in *Nirguna* (attributeless) and *Saguna* (with attributes).<sup>57</sup> He is *Saguna*, being the creator of the universe.<sup>58</sup> The *Udāsīs* believed that the universe created and protected by the *brahm* is *maya*.<sup>59</sup> They believed that *maya* makes human ‘desire’ unreal.<sup>60</sup> The practical manifestations of *brahm* are ‘wealth, women, sons, power, status, comfort and food’ which call forth man’s lust, greed and pride.<sup>61</sup> The *Udāsīs* did chant the select *bani* of

<sup>55</sup> W.H. Mcleod, *Early Sikh Tridition*, p. 203.

<sup>56</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 3<sup>b</sup>:

ਰਾਮ ਏਕ ਤਹਿ ਨਾਮ ਅਨੇਕ ॥

ਦੇਖੋ ਕਰ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਬਿਬੇਕ ॥

... ..

ਏਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਮੈ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਹਿ ਕੋ ॥

ਸਭ ਘਟਿ ਪੂਰਣ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾਹਿ ਕੋ ॥

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, . f. 29<sup>a</sup>:

ਪ੍ਰਮੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਜੋ ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਜੋ ਭਗਵਾਨ ॥

ਵਹੀ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਭਯੋ ਸਰਗੁਣਿ ਆਦਿ ਨਰਾਯਣ ਜਾਣ ॥

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 214<sup>b</sup>, 215<sup>a</sup>, 3<sup>b</sup> and 4<sup>a</sup> :

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੇ ਜਗ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਭਯੋ ਤਿਉ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

ਭਾਸੈ ਜਗ ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਹਚਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

... ..

ਉਅੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਦਾ ਮੂਲ ॥

... ..

ਉਅੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਕਾ ਬੀਜ ॥

... ..

ਆਦਿ ਉਦਾਸੀ ੴ ਅੰਕਾਰ ॥

ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਉਪਜਿਉ ਸਭ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*,. f. 17<sup>a</sup> :

ਇਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਕ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਜਾਨੋ ਮਾਯਾ ॥

ਤਾ ਮੈ ਪਰੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੀ ਛਾਯਾ ॥

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, f. 249<sup>ab</sup>:

ਬੇਦ ਜੁ ਭਾਖ ਮਾਯਾ ਤਿਸਕਾ ਸੁਨੋ ਬਿਚਾਰ ॥

ਬੇਕ ਵਾਕ ਬੂਠਾ ਨਹੀ ਮਾਨੈ ਸਭ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥

ਇਸਕੇ ਉਰ ਜੋ ਕਲਪਨਾ ਇਹੀ ਸੁ ਮਾਯਾ ਜਾਨ ॥

ਇਹੀ ਸੁ ਮਾਯਾ ਬੇਦ ਨੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਰੀ ਬਖਾਨ ॥

<sup>61</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 55<sup>a</sup>, 55<sup>ab</sup> and 59<sup>a</sup>:

ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਦੁਖ ਭੋਗਈ ਤਨ ਧਨ ਕਾ ਕਰਿ ਮੋਹੁ ॥

the Sikh *gurus* besides the *Matras* of Sri Chand and the various compositions of medieval *saints*.<sup>62</sup> For the attainment of salvation, they advocated more keenly the Hindus ways, the *gyan*, *karan* (*Janan*) and the *Bhakti Margas*.<sup>63</sup>

It was considered to be the duty of the *Udāsīs* to recite the name of God and to lead a simple life and to make others follow it. At the time of *Kumbh Mela*, they worshiped idols of Sri Chand and *Saligram*, *Vedgranth* and *Gola Sahib*. They take out huge procession on elephants, *palki*, motorcars etc. and give bath to the idol of Sri Chand, *Saligram* and *Gola Sahib*.<sup>64</sup> A true *Udāsī* should keep on reciting *Guru mantra* i.e. *Jap rupi Jagota* and keep reciting *bani* day and night i.e. *Singi Bajana*.<sup>65</sup>

The *Udāsīs* believed that in the state of ignorance (*agyan*, *avidia*) man feels proud of his possessions and commits sinful acts, as a result of which he ultimately suffers (*dukh*).<sup>66</sup> One who was ignorant and had no knowledge of God was considered

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ਕ੍ਰਮ ਮਮਤਾ ਮੈ ਝੁਬ ਹਰਯੋ ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਮਮਤਾ ਦੁਖ ਡੋਹੁ ॥  
ਮੇਰੀ ਉਪਮਾ ਮਰਤਿ ਹੈ ॥

... ..  
ਮੇਰੇ ਹਾਥੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਘੋਰੇ ਨੌਕਰਿ ਚਾਕਰਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਾਲਕੀ ॥  
ਮਿਆਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਡੇ ਮਾਨ ਹੈ ॥  
ਮੇਰੇ ਸਮ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਨ ਜਗ ਮੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਹੈ ॥

... ..  
ਜਵੈਯਾ ॥ ਹੈ ਗਜ ਬਾਜ ਰਥਾਦਿਕ ਜੇਤਕਿ ਨੌਕਰਿ ਚਾਕਰਿ ਭੋਨ ਭਡਾਰਾ ॥  
ਫੌਜ ਪ੍ਰਜਾ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਸੁਖ ਕੇ ਜਨ ਦੇਖਤਿ ਹੀ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਂਇ ਕਿਨਾਰਾ ॥

... ..  
ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਅਰ ਲੋਭ ਹੰਕਾਰਾ ।  
ਇਨਕੇ ਜਗਮੇ ਭਰੇ ਭੰਡਾਰਾ ।

<sup>62</sup> H. H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, pp. 149-50. For the Udasis belief in Kirtan Sahila, Japuji and Rehras, Also see, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, f. 310a.

<sup>63</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, ff 1-320:

<sup>64</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 54.

<sup>65</sup> Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chandra Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 27, 28; The writer has given a decided description about *matra*, *vidhi*, *vidhan*, *Sad Guru* (true Guru), truth, *Satyavadh* – *Dharmchar Sehli* (Janeau of Udasis, made of Black wool of 3 threads, *Mekhli Achala*, *Morechar*, *Jagota*, *Udani*, pp.14,27,28; ਜਾਪ ਜਗੋਟਾ ਸਿਫਤ ਉਡਾਣੀ, ਸਿੰਘੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ

<sup>66</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 16<sup>a</sup>, 17<sup>b</sup> and 22<sup>a</sup> :

ਜੀਵ ਸੀਵ ਦੋਨੋ ਦੁਖ ਪਰੇ ਸੁ ਮਾਯਾ ਮਾਹਿ ॥  
ਸੁੱਧ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੇ ਗਯਾਨ ਬਿਨ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਪਨ ਭੀ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

... ..  
ਪੁਰਖ ਪ੍ਰਕ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਇਛਾ ॥  
ਮਹਤਤ ਨਾਮ ਤਾਹਿ ਕਾ ਸਿੱਛਾ ॥

... ..  
ਮਹਤਤ ਤੇ ਉਪਜਿਉ ਹੰਕਾਰ ॥

... ..  
ਜਿਸ ਮੈ ਸਤਿ ਗੁਨ ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੱਖਯ ਸੁਜਾਨਿਯੈ ॥  
ਮਾਯਾ ਤਿਸਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ਮਹਾਨਿਯੈ ॥  
ਰਜਗੁਨਿ ਤਮਗੁਣਿ ਮਿਸ੍ਰਤ ਜਾ ਮੈ ਆਨ ਹੈ ॥

a mere *jiv*.<sup>67</sup> *Jiv* remained in the cycle of transmigration.<sup>68</sup> The sufferings were due to his actions committed in the past.<sup>69</sup> The future depended on his past *Karmas*.<sup>70</sup> The *Udāsīs* believed in renunciation (*udas*).<sup>71</sup> *Bairag* meant, the deprivation of *kam*, *artha* and *dharma*.<sup>72</sup> For them attachment with God meant a complete surrender to God, a complete detachment from the world like the lotus flower in water.<sup>73</sup> Sant Rein

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ਹੋ ਰਜ ਤਮ ਮਿਲੀ ਅਵਿਦਿਯਾ ਸਿੱਖਯ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ।

<sup>67</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 22<sup>a</sup>:

ਬਹੁਰ ਅਵਿਦਿਯਾ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਰਯੋ ਜੋ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

ਹੈ ਜੀਵ ਨਾਮ ਤਹਿ ਪਰਿਯੋ ਸਿੱਖਯ ਮਹਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 4<sup>a</sup> and 55<sup>a</sup>:

ਮਿਸਰਤ ਕਰਮ ਜੁ ਕਰੈ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥

ਜਨਮੇ ਮਰੈ ਸੁ ਬਾਰਮ ਬਾਰੇ ॥

... ..

ਦੋਹਰਾ॥ ਕਰਮ ਫਿਰਾਂਵੇ ਜੀਵ ਕੇ ਲੱਖਯ ਚੁਰਾਸੀ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਨੇ ਇਉ ਕਹਯੋ ਇਸ ਮੈ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 242<sup>a</sup> and 66<sup>b</sup>:

ਪਰਾ ਲਭਯਿ ਕਰਮਨਿ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ।

ਬੂਲ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਰਚੈ ਕਰਤਾਰ

ਸੁਖ ਦੁਖ ਪਰਬਲਾ ਜੋ ਕਰਮ

ਤਿਸ ਬਿਨ ਭੋਗਾ ਜਾਇ ਨਾ ਮਰਮ ।

... ..

ਪੂਰਬ ਪਾਪ ਕਰਮ ਸੋ ਜਾਨ ।

ਭੋਗੈ ਜੀਵ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ਮਹਾਨ ॥

<sup>70</sup> ff. 47<sup>ab</sup> and 48<sup>a</sup>:

ਕਰਮ ਕਰੇ ਇਕ ਜਨਮ ਜੁ ਜੀਵ ਮਹਾਨਿਯੈ ॥

ਅਨਿਕ ਜਨਮ ਤਿਸਕਾ ਫਲੁ ਭੋਗੈ ਜਾਨਿਯੈ ॥

... ..

ਇਹ ਸੰਤਹਿ ਰੇਣ ਕਹੇਯੋ ਗੁਰ ਨੈ ਜਨਮੇ ਸੁ ਮਰੈ ਕਰਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰੇ ॥

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, f. 143<sup>a</sup>:

ਮਾਯਾ ਕੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਪਰਹਰੇ ॥

ਮਾਯਾ ਤਜ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਮੁਹੁ ਕਰੇ ॥

ਮਾਯਾ ਮੋਹੁ ਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਫਾਸੀ ॥

ਜਗ ਮਮਤਾ ਸਿਉ ਫਿਰੈ ਚੁਰਾਸੀ ॥

ਪ੍ਰਤ੍ਨਿ ਮੋਹੁ ਨਰਕ ਮੈ ਡਾਰੇ ॥

ਘਰ ਬਨਿਤਾ ਮੁਹੁ ਪਾਪ ਸੁ ਸਾਰੇ ।

... ..

ਸਤਿ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਖਿਮਾ ਮਨ ਰਹੇ ॥

ਆਸਾ ਛੋਡਿ ਨਿਰਾਸਾਰ ਰਹੇ ॥

ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਲ ਬਾਤ ਨ ਕਹੇ ॥

ਇਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਿੱਖਯ ਅਹੇ ॥

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, f. 186<sup>a</sup>:

ਤੀਨ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਕੋ ਤਜੈ ਰਹੈ ਰਾਮ ਸਿਉ ਲਾਗ ॥

ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਇਉ ਕਹਿਤ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਰਾਗ ॥

ਤੀਨ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਜਾਨ ਇਹ ਧਰਮ ਅਰਥ ਅਰੁ ਕਾਮ ॥

ਇਨ ਤੀਨੋਂ ਕੋ ਤਯਾਗ ਕਰਿ ਲਖੈ ਆਤਮਾ ਰਾਮ ॥

<sup>73</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 200<sup>b</sup>:

considered such detached ones as ‘sants’ and highlighted their importance<sup>74</sup> and equated them as *sants of Nirguna Braham*.<sup>75</sup>

The *Udāsīs* advocated the idea of lending help (*sewa*) and denounced the disbeliever of *sadhus* and *sants*.<sup>76</sup> They inculcated deep reverence for the ‘Guru’ who

ਭਗਰਤਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਜੋ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਮਹਾਨ ਰੇ ।  
 ਤੇਹਿ ਗੇਹਿ ਤੇ ਰਹੈ ਉਦਾਸ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
 ਰਹੈ ਅਤਿਥ ਸਮਾਨ ਸੁ ਘਰਿ ਮੈ ਜਾਨਿਯੈ ॥  
 ਹੋ ਤਨ ਧਨ ਅਪਨਾ ਮਾਨੈ ਨਹਿ ਆਹਿ ਰੇ ॥  
 ਭਘਵਤਿ ਕੀ ਸਭ ਜਾਨੈ ਅਪਨੀ ਨਾਹਿ ਰੇ ॥  
 ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਮਾਹੀ ਕਵਲ ਰਹੈ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਰੇ ॥  
 ਹੋ ਤੇਸੇ ਜਗ ਮੈ ਰਹ ਕਰਿ ਰਹੈ ਅਲਪੇ ਰੇ ॥

<sup>74</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 5<sup>a</sup>, 8<sup>b</sup> and 9<sup>c</sup>:

ਸੰਤ ਸੰਗ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੈ ਭਗਤੇ ॥  
 ਭਗਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸੁ ਹੋਏ ਬਿਰਕਤੇ ॥  
 .....  
 ਤਿਨ ਜੀਵਨ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਸੁ ਖਾਤਿਰ ॥  
 ਭਘਵਤਿ ਸੰਤ ਸੁ ਕੀਨੇ ਚਾਤਰਿ ॥

... ..  
 ਭਗਤੀ ਨਾਮ ਸੁ ਗਯਾਨ ਦਿੜਵਹਿ ॥  
 ਜੀਵਨ ਕੋ ਹਰ ਪਦ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਵਹਿ ॥  
 ਨਿਜ ਮੁਖ ਭਗਵਤਿ ਵਾਕ ਉਚਾਰੇ ॥  
 ਮੋ ਤਨ ਤੇ ਮੁਹਿ ਸੰਤ ਪਿਆਰੇ ॥  
 ਸੰਤਨਿ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਹੈ ਜੋਸ਼ਹ ॥  
 ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾਦਿਕ ਕਹੈ ਸਕੈ ਨ ਸੋਇ ॥  
 ਸੰਤਨਿ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਕਹੀ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ ॥  
 ਨੇਤਿ ਨੇਤਿ ਤਹਿ ਬੇਦ ਸੁ ਗਾਇ ॥

<sup>75</sup> *f. 9<sup>a</sup>*:

ਭਗਵਤਿ ਰੂਪ ਸੰਤ ਸਭ ਹਯੈ ॥  
 ਸੰਤਨਿ ਸੰਗ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਲਹਯੈ ॥  
 ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਰੂਪ ਸੰਤ ਸਭ ਜਾਨੈ ॥  
 ਇਸ ਮੈ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਰੰਚਿਕਿ ਮਾਨੈ ॥  
 ਸੰਤਨਿ ਸੰਗ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਲਹਯੈ ॥  
 ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਰੂਪ ਸੰਤ ਸਭ ਜਾਨੈ ॥  
 ਇਸ ਮੈ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਰੰਚਿਕਿ ਮਾਨੈ ॥  
 ਸੰਤਨਿ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਜਾਹਿ ਨ ਭਾਵੈ ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਸੋ ਜਮਪੁਰ ਜਾਵੈ ॥

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 9<sup>a</sup>, 77<sup>b</sup> and 78<sup>a</sup>:

ਸਲੋਕ॥ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਤਨਿ ਕੀ ਕਰੈ ਕਿਰਤਿ ਕਮਾਇ ਜੁ ਖਾਇ ॥  
 ਘਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਕੋ ਹਰਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਿਸਕੋ ਆਪ ਸੁ ਆਇ ॥  
 ਕਬੀਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਕੋ ਦੋ ਭਲੇ ਏਕ ਸੰਤ ਏਕ ਰਾਮ ॥  
 ਰਾਮ ਸੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਾ ਸੰਤ ਜਪਾਵੈ ਨਾਮ ॥  
 ਕਬੀਰ ਆਗ ਲਗੀ ਬੈਰੁਨ ਮੈ ਝੜਿ ਝੜਿ ਪੜਹਿ ਅੰਗਾਰ ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਨ ਹੋਤੇ ਜਗਤਿ ਮੈ ਜਲ ਮਰਤਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ।

... ..  
 ਸਾਧੂ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਰੈ ॥  
 ਧੋਬੀ ਕੈ ਘਰਿ ਜਨਮ ਸੁ ਧਰੈ ॥  
 .....  
 ਕਰੈ ਫੇੜਨਾ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਮਤਿ ਮੰਤ ਮਹਾਨ ॥

was virtually a God.<sup>77</sup> The priests were not supposed to disobey Guru's order (agya).<sup>78</sup> The detractors of the Guru (*guru nindak*) were severely criticized by them.<sup>79</sup> It was impossible to make a distinction between the Guru and the God.<sup>80</sup> Every 'Sikh' (disciple) was capable of being raised to the status of the Guru.<sup>81</sup> *Udāsīs* believed that without word (*sabad*) realization of *Brahm* was impossible.<sup>82</sup> They believed in the word *nirguna* and *saguna*<sup>83</sup> and equated it with *Brahm*.<sup>84</sup>

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ਦੂਜੇ ਜਨਮ ਚੁਮਾਰ ਸੋ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਰ ਸੋ ਮਾਨ ॥

... ..  
ਹਰਿ ਸੰਤਿਨ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਜੋਇਅ ॥  
ਪਰਮ ਸੁ ਭਗਤੀ ਜਾਨੈ ਸੋਇ ॥

<sup>77</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 10<sup>a</sup>:

ਗੁਰ ਸਮ ਐਰ ਨ ਦੇਵ ਕੋ ਪਰਮ ਦੇਵ ਗੁਰ ਦੇਵ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਕੀ ਮਨ ਲਾਇ ਕਰੀਐ ਸੇਵ ॥

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, f. 304<sup>ab</sup>:

ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਆਗਯਾ ਜੋਇ ਫਿਰਾਇ ॥  
ਚਮਗਿਦੜ ਕਾ ਜਨਮ ਸੁ ਪਾਇ ॥

<sup>79</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 68<sup>b</sup>:

ਨਿਜ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਰੈ ॥  
ਸੋ ਨਰ ਜਾਇ ਨਰਕ ਮੇ ਪਰੈ ॥

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, f. 231<sup>a</sup>:

ਗੁਰ ਸਮ ਅਵਰੁ ਦਿਆਲ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਲੋਕ ਬੇਦ ਇਮ ਭਾਖੈ ਦੋਇ ॥  
ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸੰਸ੍ਰ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ॥  
ਯਾਹਿ ਵਿਖੇ ਕਛੂ ਨਾਹੀ ਭਰਮ ॥

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, f. 231<sup>b</sup>:

ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖ ਕੋ ਅਪਨੇ ਸਮ ਕਰੈ ॥

... ..  
ਜਿਉ ਦੀਪਕ ਤੇ ਦੀਪਕ ਲਾਇ ॥  
ਦੋਨੋ ਦੀਪਕ ਏਕੈ ਭਾਇ ॥  
ਦੀਪਕ ਸਮ ਦੀਪਕ ਹੈ ਜਾਨ ॥  
ਤਿਉ ਸਿਖ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਾਨ ॥

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, f. 233<sup>b</sup>:

ਦੋਹਰਾ॥ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਉਨੈ ਸੋ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਪਰੈ ਤਹਿ ਕਾਨ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਤਿਉ ਸਬਦਿ ਕਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੈ ਭਗਵਾਨ ॥

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 232<sup>b</sup> and 233<sup>a</sup>:

ਦੁਇ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਸਬਦ ਕੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਸਰਗੁਣਿ ਜਾਨ ॥

... ..  
ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਅਨਭਵ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਸੱਤਾ ਮਾਤ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ॥  
ਸਰਗੁਣਿ ਸੰਤਹਿ ਰੇਣ ਸੋ ਸੁਖਮ ਰੂਪ ਮਹਾਨ ॥  
ਸਲੋਕ॥ ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੇ ਮਾਹਿ ਸੋ ਸਰਗੁਣਿ ਬੇਦ ਮਝਾਰ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਕਾ ਆਹਿ ਸੁ ਗੁਣਿ ਬਿਚਾਰ ॥

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 239<sup>a</sup> and 232<sup>b</sup>:

ਸਬਦਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਹਮ ਤੋ ਭਾਖੈ ਰੋਜ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਗੁਰ—ਸਬਦਿ ਕਾ ਕਰੋ ਭਲੀ ਥਿਧ ਖੋਜ ॥  
ਸਲੋਕ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਸਦਿ ਤੇ ਪਰੈ ਹੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਕੇ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

The *Udāsīs* believed in charity<sup>85</sup> (*Dan or Pun*) as an antidote to *pap*. Brahmins were deemed fit for charity<sup>86</sup> and the articles of charity included oil, corn, clothes, silken bed, cows, horses, bull-cart, diamonds, pearls, golden and silver.<sup>87</sup>

Instead of *Boloji-Wah-i-Guru*, the *Udāsīs* adopted *gajo Ji Wah-i-guru*, as directed by *Mahant* Pritam Das. They greeted one another with *pairin paina* or *matha tekna*.<sup>88</sup> The *Udāsī* attitude towards the disposal of the dead body was not uniform. Though they largely followed the Hindu way, some of them followed the practice of burying the dead body.<sup>89</sup>

At the death of *Udāsī Mahatma*, the *Gita*, *Upnishad* or *Matra Shastra* was to be recited. The deceased was given *Ganga Jal*, *Tulsi leaves*, and the ash from Sri Chand's *Dhuan*. His body was set in the sitting posture and was given bath. After that it was fully clad in new clothes, which included *seli*, *topi*, and *vibhuti*. The body

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ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਇਸ ਸਮਝਿ ਕੇ ਪਾਇ ਸਕੇ ਕੂਢਿ ਨਾਹਿ ।।

.....  
ਸਬਦਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੋਨੋ ਸਦਾ ਅਰਸ ਪਰਸ ਪਹਚਾਨ ।।

<sup>85</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 81<sup>b</sup>, 82<sup>a</sup> and 82<sup>b</sup>:

ਅੰਸ ਰਸਤੇ ਤਿਨ ਜਮ ਲੇ ਜਾਵਹਿ ।

ਕਰਿਯੋ ਪੁੰਨਯ ਤਹਾ ਸੋ ਪਾਵਹਿ ।

... ..

ਪੁੰਨਯ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਪਾਪ ਸੋ ਭਾਗੇ ।

... ..

ਅਧਿਕ ਪੁੰਨਯ ਸੁਰ ਲੋਕ ਲਜਾਵਹਿ ।

ਅਧਿਕ ਪਾਪ ਤਿਨ ਨਰਕ ਸੁ ਪਾਵਹਿ ।

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 82<sup>ab</sup>, 84<sup>a</sup> and 85<sup>a</sup>:

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 80<sup>ab</sup> and 81<sup>a</sup> :

ਕੀਉ ਤੇਲਿ ਜਿਨਿ ਪੁੰਨਯ ਪਰਾਨੀ ।

ਤਹਾ ਕਾਮ ਸੋ ਆਯ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ ।।

ਸੰਤ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਕੇ ਅਸਥਾਨ ।।

ਅਥਵਾ ਦੇਵ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਜਾਨ ।।

ਦੀਪਕ ਲਾਇ ਜਾਹਿ ਪਰਾਨੀ ।।

ਤਹਾ ਕਾਮ ਸੋ ਆਯ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ ।।

ਮਹਾ ਸੋ ਘੋਰ ਅਧੋਰ ਜਹਾ ।।

ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਹੋਇਅ ਚਾਨਣਾ ਤਹਾ।।

.....

ਜੋੜਾ ਘੋੜਾ ਪੁੰਨਯ ਜੁ ਕਰੇ ।।

ਤਿਸ ਬਾਲੂ ਮੈ ਕਾਮ ਸੁ ਪਰੇ ।।

.....

ਬਸਤਰਿ ਪੁੰਨਯ ਕਰੈ ਜੋ ਭਾਈ ।।

ਤਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਸੋ ਹੈ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ।।

ਹੀਰੇ ਪੰਨੇ ਕੰਚਨਿ ਜਾਨ ।।

ਮੋਤੀ ਮੁੰਗੇ ਅਉਰ ਮਹਾਨ ।।

<sup>88</sup> Major R. Leech, "Notes on the Religion of the Sikhs and other Sects inhabiting the Punjab"; *Foreign/Secret Consultations*, 20 December; 1845, No. 144; Sulakhan Singh "Heterodoxy in Sikhism"; "The case of the Udasis", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, 1982, p. 58.

<sup>89</sup> *Census of India*, 1891, Part I, Vol. XIX, pp. 51-52; A.H. Bingley, *The Sikhs*, Punjab Languages Department, Patiala 1970 (reprint), pp. 87-88.



was carried in a procession along with beating of drums and chanting of *bhajans*. A heavy stone was tied to the body and it was immersed in water or given to the fire. On the third day of cremation the remains were collected and immersed in Ganga. Some buried the dead and constructed a *samadh* over it, and kept a placard indicating the birth and death. The last rites performed by the *Udāsīs* at the death of the *Udāsī Sants* were quite similar to the *Vedic* traditions.<sup>90</sup>

The *Udāsīs* professed no interest in the worldly affairs<sup>91</sup> and the political gains.<sup>92</sup> Their only concern was with religious pursuits. But there were some references during the second half of the nineteenth century, of such *Udāsī Sants* who remained intact within the establishments and did not adhere to the religious pursuits.<sup>93</sup> Many of the *Udāsīs* moved from one place to another during their wandering years, but did come back to their original place of stay afterwards.<sup>94</sup> The places like Amritsar, Dera Baba Nanak and Katarpur find special mention in this context.<sup>95</sup> It was assumed that there were about three hundred and seventy centers of the *Udāsīs* in Northern India.<sup>96</sup>

The *Udāsīs* were supposed to follow renunciation (*udas*) and to practise celibacy. The *Nanga Udāsīs* were said to have followed this practice sternly.<sup>97</sup> However marriage was not uncommon among the *Udāsīs* in general.<sup>98</sup> In the Ludhiana district, the British settlement officer found some *Udāsī* families, notably that of Jaspal Bangar, following the custom to marry. The law of succession of the *gaddi* of the *Mahant*, however, generally remained the same: from the Guru to the *chela*. The eldest son did not succeed to the *gaddi* as a matter of course. Significantly, however, the *Mahants* rarely married because by doing so they could loose their

<sup>90</sup> Jaggannath Sharma, *Udasi Sampanda*, pp. 54, 55; Parshuram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat ki Sant Prampra*, pp. 361-362; Swami. Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chandra Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>91</sup> Lepel H. Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs*, T.C. McCarthey, Lahore pp. 609-10.

<sup>92</sup> Parshuram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat Ki Sant Parampra*, pp. 361-363; Swami. Hariram Das Udasin mentions that on being questioned by a Nath, Almast answered that desire is the cause of suffering and *nirasha* is *Param Sukh*. He suggests one should try to conquer *asha* or desire, pp. 41,42.

<sup>93</sup> *Census of Punjab*, 1881, Vol. I, p. 286.

<sup>94</sup> W. H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 149; D. Ibbetson and E.D. MacLagan, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, Vol. III, 1970, p. 479.

<sup>95</sup> *Census of India*, 1891, Part I, Vol. XIX, p. 152

<sup>96</sup> Parshuram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat Ki Sant Parampra*, p. 362.

<sup>97</sup> *Census of the Punjab*, 1881, Vol.I, p. 286; D. Ibbetson and E.D. MacLagan, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, p. 228.

<sup>98</sup> Lepel H. Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs*, 1865, 609-10; Also see, *Punjab States Gazetteers: Phulkian States*, Patiala, Jind, Nabha, 1904, p. 78.

influence among the people. Their institutions were sooner or later turned into private residences closed to strangers and needy people.<sup>99</sup> The majority of the *Udāsīs* were ascetic, only some of them were found engaged in secular pursuits.<sup>100</sup>

In their appearance, the *Udāsīs* did not conform to the symbols of the Sikhs. Their various Orders had some distinctive marks and practices. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, H.H. Wilson found them generally well dressed, seldom dispensing with clothes altogether.<sup>101</sup> Major R. Leech, however, noticed two groups of naked (*nange*) *Udāsīs* : the *Nirban* and the *Niranjanias*. Both owed their origin to Pritam Das. They wore only loin-cloths and smeared their bodies with ash to protect them from both extremes of temperature.<sup>102</sup> The *Udāsīs* of the *bakhshishes* of Bhagat Bhagwan and Sangat Sahib showed special reverence for the ashes.<sup>103</sup> They used *seli* (cord) and *topi* (cap), *kharavan* (pettens). *Phulmala* (rosary of flowers) *jholi* (bag), *tumba* (dried pumkin) and black *asan*.<sup>104</sup> The *Diwane Udāsīs* were distinguished by the necklace of shells they usually wore round the *pagri* (turban).<sup>105</sup>

The *Udāsīs* of the *bakhshish* of Bhagat Bhagwan wore a *janjir* (chain) round the waist and smeared their body with ashes.<sup>106</sup> It may be added here that during his travels into the Punjab in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, William Moorcroft remarked about the simple living of the *Udāsīs* in general, ‘he had never met with persons of more simple, unaffected and pious manners than the *Udāsīs*’.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>99</sup> *Final Report on the Revision of Settlement of Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, 1888-89, p. 80; *Census of India*, 1891, Part I, Vol. XIX, p. 152.

<sup>100</sup> Major R. Leech, “Notes on the Religion of the Sikhs and other Sects inhabiting the Punjab”; *Foreign / Secret Consultations*, 20 December 1845, No. 144.

<sup>101</sup> H.H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 149.

<sup>102</sup> Major R. Leech, “Notes on the Religion of the Sikh and Other Sects inhabiting the Punjab”, *Foreign / Secret Consultations*, 20 December 1845, No. 144.

<sup>103</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, pp. 1278 and 1280. Also see, *Census of India*, 1891, Vol. XIX, Part I, p. 152.

<sup>104</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, f 309 a:

ਸਵੈਯਾ। ਸੁੰਦਰ ਅੰਗ ਬਿਭੂਤਿ ਚੜੀ ਸਨਕਾਦਿਕ ਸੀਸ ਜਟਾਂ ਬਿਧਰਾਨ ।

ਪਾਇ ਖੜਾਉ ਦਿਗੰਬਰ ਭੇਖ ਜਪੇ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੁ ਬਖਾਨ ।।

ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮ ਲਖੇ ਸਭ ਮੈ ਇਕ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਏਕ ਸਮਾਨ ।

ਫੁਲ ਸੁ ਮਾਲ ਸੁ ਹੈ ਗਲ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਏ ਸਭ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਨ । 27 ।

ਸਲੋਕ। ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅੰਚਲੇ ਹਿਰਮਚੀ ਟੋਪੀ ਸੇਲੀ ਨਾਲ ।

ਤੂੰਬੇ ਬਟੂਏ ਸਭਨਿ ਪੇ ਸੋਭਾ ਬਨੀ ਬਿਸਾਲ । 28 ।

<sup>105</sup> Punjab States Gazetteers, Phulkian States, Patiala Jind Nabha, 1904, p. 76

<sup>106</sup> D. Ibbetson and E.D. MacLagan, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, p. 480.

<sup>107</sup> William Moorcroft and George Trebeck, *Travels*, p. 72. Also see, *District Gazetteer, Amritsar* 1892-93, p. 15.

H.H. Wilson observed that they kept moustaches and beard and were of very attractive appearance.<sup>108</sup> However, the *Udāsīs* of Bhagat Bhagwan wore *jattan* (hair-locks).<sup>109</sup> *Diwane Udāsīs* used to cut their hair and blackened their faces.<sup>110</sup>

The *Udāsīs* generally ate what was cooked by others, irrespective of their caste of creed.<sup>111</sup> The *Sangat Sahibia Udāsīs*, however, were supposed not to eat with others.<sup>112</sup> The *Bhagat Bhagwanias* were supposed to follow Guru Nanak's precepts regarding their dietary habits.<sup>113</sup> Generally, the *Udāsīs* were supposed to abstain from making any use of flesh, spirits and tobacco.<sup>114</sup> On a festive occasion, in order to call the visitors gathered in for eating food, they used to call out *unnki Puja karo Nanak nirbani*.<sup>115</sup>

The *Udāsīs* were clearly heterodox in terms of both doctrine and practice and they were not uniform in their outward appearance, dietary habits, and their objects and modes of worship. As a missionary of the *Udāsī* tradition, Sant Rein has given enough space to the history of its origin and growth in terms of a '*Panth*'. He sought patronage from his contemporary Sikh rulers by way of representing the *Udāsī* tradition as a tradition of the '*Nanabhans*' i.e. the '*Nanakpanthis*', the followers of Guru Nanak.<sup>116</sup> By doing all this he was perhaps not only seeking patronage from his contemporary Sikh ruling classes and landed aristocracy, but also was definitely widening his social base among the people of different strata of society during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

We are in a position to know more about the views of the *Udāsīs* regarding the nature of God and several other concepts of theology and philosophy such as *maya*, *bhakti*, *mukti*, *vairag*, *atman*, *janan* or *gyan*, *karam* or the theory of transmigration of the soul, *pap*, *pun*, *dukh*, and the five evils i.e. *kam*, *krodh*, *lobh*,

<sup>108</sup> H.H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 149.

<sup>109</sup> D. Ibbetson and E.D. Maclagan, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, p. 480.

<sup>110</sup> Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, pp. 1282-83.

<sup>111</sup> M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. I, Trubner & Co., London, 1872, p. 268.

<sup>112</sup> *Census of India*, 1981, Part I, Vol. XIX, 151-52.

<sup>113</sup> D. Ibbetson and E.D. Maclagan, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, p. 480.

<sup>114</sup> J.C Oman, *Hindu Ascetics, Mystics and Saints of India*, 1951, p. 195; Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Parkash*, p. 1272.

ਮਾਸ, ਸ਼ਰਾਬ, ਤਮਾਕੂ, ਭੰਗ

ਐਸੀ ਵਸਤ ਨੇ ਛੋਤੇ ਐਗ । 71 ।

<sup>115</sup> J.C. Oman, *Hindu Ascetics, Mystics and Saints of India*, 261

<sup>116</sup> Balwinder Jeet, *A Critical Editing of Sant Rein's Udasi Bodh* (Ph.D, Thesis), Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 2004, p. 13.

*moh* and *ahankar*. A close analysis of the *Udāsī Bodh* brings to light the *Udāsī* response to the evils prevalent in the social milieu in early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Apart from expressing in detail the views of the *Udāsīs* on theology and Philosophy, it informs about the early 19<sup>th</sup> century self-image of the *Udāsīs* as well as their popular attitudes, beliefs and practices.<sup>117</sup>

The analysis of the religious ideology and beliefs of the *Udāsīs* shows their compromise with both Hindu and Sikh religious systems of thought. Their theological and Philosophical ideas and beliefs are very largely based on Hindu and Sikh scriptures particularly the *Vedas*, the *Bhagvatgita* and the *Adi Granth* of the *Sikhs*. It may not be unsafe to say that in regard to their religious beliefs and Philosophical ideas, they appeared to be more close to the Hindu thought, particularly the *Vedantic* schools of Philosophy, although their acceptance or recognition of the fundamental ideas of Sikh thought propounded by Guru Nanak can not be denied or ignored altogether. Their unorthodoxy or heterodoxy, appears partly to have been the result of their attempt to work out a compromise.

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<sup>117</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, MS 1858, 319 ab.

## CHAPTER-VI

### HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF *UDĀSĪ* LITERATURE

The *Udāsī* literature is not only the earlier specimen of preaching in prose, but also a source material for the history of medieval Punjab. A significant aspect of this literature is that it helps us to teach goodness through literature having biographical elements. It consists of various forms such as the *Udāsī Matre*, the biographies of Baba Sri Chand, exposition of the *Bani* recorded in the *Adi-Granth*, works on *Udāsī* doctrine and history and the twentieth century polemical *Udāsī* works and as such it provides valuable insights on polity, society, and culture of the times. It is available in numerous religious and non-religious forms. Baba Sri Chand's compositions particularly pertain to *Udāsī* cult, its obligations and practices; the works of the twentieth century writers like Brahmanand and Randhir Singh particularly relate to the socio-political and religious conditions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which considerably affected the course of *Udāsī* history vis-z-vis the main stream Sikh history. The chapter has been divided into two major sections; the first contains the writings of seventeenth and eighteenth century writers starting with its founder Baba Sri Chand and others, and the second section covers the works of nineteenth and twentieth century writers depicting their different moods and shades of polity, society, religion and culture of that time.

#### I

The *Udāsī* literature begins with the works attributed to Baba Sri Chand which include *Matre Shastra*, *Aarta*, *Guru Gayatri*, *Sahansarnama*, *Matravani* and *commentaries* on the *Vedas*, the *Upnishdas*. The term *Matra* has many explanations to its name. The word is derived from *Sanskrit* language and means 'measure of any kind, metrical unit, a more or prosodial instant i.e., the length of time required to pronounce a short vowel, a diacritical mark etc.'<sup>1</sup> But in *Udāsī* literature, *Matra* has a special connotation. It stands for incantation, a sacred text; or the sacred magical or a sacred formula addressed to the deities; a mystical verse or a counsel to the disciple, charm

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Monieur William, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Originally published in 1899, First Indian edition 1976, Munshi Ram Manohar Lal Publishers, Delhi, p. 804; Also see, Gopal Muni, *Matra Manthan*, Kankhal, Haridwar, 2007, p. 1.

or spell etc. It also conveys the sense of treatise and commentary, the gospel and preaching of the *Udāsī Sadhus*.<sup>2</sup> According to another explanation, the word *Matra*, is a mixture of two words; *Maa* and *tra*, the former stands for *Maya* and the latter means the protector, i.e., one who protects from *Maya*. *Matra* is also termed as ‘*Karnbhushan*’<sup>3</sup> meaning an ornament for those, who are in search of truth. In other words, the *Matra* is the jewellery or the property of the *Udāsīs*. It is a parameter to assess a *Sadhu*, as it contains those guidelines which give directions to a *Sadhu* about the code of conduct to be followed by him.<sup>4</sup>

The main themes of these *Matras*, stress the significance of *Naam Simran* and direct the disciples to lead a simple, detached life and strive for social welfare and to follow the *Adhyatam Marga* (The Mystic Path) for the attainment of *Mukti* or *Nirvan* (salvation). The *Udāsīs* believe, that by reciting the *Matras* daily and after gaining the *tatgyan* (the core idea) of the *Matra*, one can get rid of one’s ignorance (*Agyan*). Enlightenment with the knowledge of *Brahm Gyan* (spiritual knowledge of the highest truth) the *Jeev* (the Human Soul) can get freedom from the shackles of *Ava Gaman* (cycle of rebirth) and can get *Nirvan* from the worldly existence. According to *Udāsīs*, cultivation of the *Matra* in real practice leads to the highest attainment of *Udāsī Dharma* (the path of the *Udāsī*) which is to become *Paramhansa* (The liberator soul).<sup>5</sup> Bhai Mani Singh’s *Gian Ratnawali* shows, that any *Udāsī* who has experienced God was as good as the Guru.<sup>6</sup>

*Matras* vary in number as several of their versions are available in *Gurmukhi*, Hindi, and *Devnagari* literature. The Hindi version is the attempt made therein to establish an invariable connection of these *Matras* to Puranic mythology in order to emphasize and to legitimize the Hindu origin of the *Udāsīs*. On the whole, *Gurmukhi* literature of the *Udāsīs* refers to the *Matras* of Guru Nanak, Baba Sri Chand, Baba Gurditta, Almast, Balu Hasna, Bhagat Bhagwan, and various other *Udāsī sants*. The *Devnagari* literature of the *Udāsīs* abounds primarily in the *Matras* attributed to Sri Chand alone. These *Matras* are found in various works of the *Udāsīs* with little or

<sup>2</sup> Madanjit Kaur, “*Udasi Matras*”, *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>3</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampradaye ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> Vishnu Datt Rakesh, *Acharya Sri Chandra, Sadhna, Sidhant aur Sahitya*, Panchayati Akhara Bara, Udasin Nirvan, Haridwar, 1986, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Madanjit Kaur, “*Udasi Matras*”, *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> Surjit Singh Hans, *Historical Analysis of Sikh Literature (1500-1850 AD)*, p. 348, 51,52; and his article: “Early Sikh Tradition”, *Journal of Regional History*, Department of history, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Vol. 1, 1980, p. 185.

slight variation.<sup>7</sup> Though presumably written during the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, the *Matras* contain very useful information on the *Udāsī* code of conduct (code of discipline) or their religious morals and ethics which they were supposed to observe in their daily life. The *Udāsī Matras* hold a special significance relating to the problem of the origin and foundation of the *Udāsī* fold.

*Udāsī Matras* or *Matre* is a collection of hymns ascribed to the founder of the *Udāsī* sect, Baba Sri Chand. They contain the teachings of the *Udāsī* preachers and the practices to be followed by the *Udāsī sadhs*. In fact, *Matre* serve as useful information on *Udāsī* code of conduct, their morals, ethics and their way of life.

The text of the *Matras* attributed to **Guru Nanak** is composed in *Sadhukari* or *Sant Bhasha* and is found in *Gurmukhi* script, which is considered to be original.<sup>8</sup> The full text contains sixteen stanzas. Some of the *Udāsī* sources quote only first seven stanzas. Therefore, it is presumed that the principal *Matra* attributed to Guru Nanak comprised of only seven stanzas and rest is just an epilogue of the major text. It claims to define the cosmos, the nature of, ultimate reality and the attributes of God. The ultimate reality is described as transcendent as well as immanent in relation to mundane world. It is visualized through the *Jap* (meditation) of the *Sat Nam* (true name) with the help of the Guru. This higher reality reveals itself to man, to enlighten him with *Udāsī* (detachment) the highest stage of spiritual transformation depicted as mystical union with God. The attainment of mystical union with God comes as the culmination or the perfection of the spiritual developments which is the merging of individual *Sanyasi* (mendicant) into the *Sohang Akhar* (the word of identity with God). The spiritual path of *Udāsī dharm* transforms an ordinary person into an *avdhut* or enlightened soul. *Mukti* (salvation) is not to be found in any mechanical submission to any particular sacred text, *Shastras*, *Vedas*, or *Puranas* etc., but through *Udāsī Karma* (or action befitting *Udāsī*). The putative spiritual attainment is truly achieved by *Sahaj* (renunciation). The true detachment of an ascetic is that of a person who keeps his desires under restraint and seeks the truth. The path of the *Udāsī* was open to all, irrespective of caste.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Madanjit Kaur, “*Udasi Matras*”, *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>8</sup> The text of the *Matras* attributed to Guru Nanak purport to be an original work, but is really a compilation: Madanjit Kaur, “*Udasi Matras*”, *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, pp. 31, 32.

<sup>9</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript 1858, Guru Nanak Heritage Centre and Archival Cell, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, f 203<sup>a</sup>:

ਕਿਸੀ ਬਰਣ ਮੇਂ ਭਗਤਿ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ  
ਪਰਮ ਸਰੋਸਟਿ ਜਾਨੈ ਸੋਇ ।

The *Matra Shastra* of **Baba Sri Chand** contains thirty six stanzas, having the core subject of those ideas and issues which are fundamental to *Udāsī* thought and tradition<sup>10</sup>. *Matras* comprise answers to various questions put by the *Sidhas* to Baba Sri Chand on various issues pertaining to his mode of dress, his religious symbols, his antecedents, name of his Guru, motto of his spiritual research, mission of his life and destination.<sup>11</sup> It is comprised in *Nagari* language and is found in *Gurmukhi* and *Devnagari* Scripts.

Some *Matras* of Sri Chand are found in *Sri Prakash Granth*, a copy of which is kept at present in the famous *Udāsī* centre, Dera Baba Ram Rai at Dehra Doon. The prominent *Matras* in the *Sri Prakash Granth* are strong evidence of the fact that Baba Sri Chand imbibed the knowledge of metaphysics from his father Guru Nanak in perfection. It is also recorded in the *Matra Shastra* that Baba Sri Chand received *Bij Mantrs* (the first original Syllable of the *Matra*) from Guru Nanak,<sup>12</sup> though the *Udāsī* tradition maintains that Avinashi Muni was Sri Chand's teacher. Madanjit Kaur writes, "Sri Chand, in his *Matras*, discloses his identity only as son of Nanak and not as a prophet or founder of a new faith. This position is reinforced by the fact that Baba Sri Chand was neither a rebel nor he was hostile to the religious system founded by his father. He had selected his own way of life. He was neither rejected by his father nor did he protest against his selection of Guru Angad to the *Gurugaddi* of Nanak". To prove her point she states, "Baba Sri Chand composed one hundred and twenty five (125) stanzas in praise of Guru Nanak, under the title *Guru Nanak Sainsrnama*, ruled out all such possibilities". There is no denying the fact that Sri Chand admired and respected Guru Nanak, as a spiritual teacher and preacher and he never had any conflict in preaching the doctrines of his father and never went against his wishes as far as nomination and selection of Guru Angad was concerned. It is also noted that he was not having cordial relations with Guru Angad and other three who followed him

<sup>10</sup> R.L.Nigham, "Baba Sri Chand" (AD 1494-1643), *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> There are different versions associated with the origin of *Matra Shastra* attributed to Baba Sri Chand. According to one version, during his travels in the Chamba hills in Kartik Sudi 5, Samvat 1723, i.e 1666 A.D., Baba Sri Chand had a *goshti* (dialogue) with the *Sidhas* (like Bharthari, Gorakhnath, Achhal Nath, Kandhari Nath, Rattan Nath etc.). The questions asked and the answers given formed the contents of these *Matras*. According to another version, during his travels in Kashmir, while Baba Sri Chand was visiting Srinagar on a full moon night of Asrar Samvat, 1680 BK i.e 1623 A.D., he initiated his disciples in *Matra Shastra* (incantations): *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, Manuscript No. 75, ff 516-519; Also see, Madanjit Kaur, "Udasi Matras", *Seminar Paper on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, p. 33; See Appendix I.

<sup>12</sup> Madanjit Kaur, "Udasi Matras", *Seminar Paper on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, p. 36; Ishar Singh Nara, *Baba Sri Chand Ji Sahib Ate Udasin Sampardaye*, pp. 311-319.



as the successors of Guru Nanak. The cordiality in relations of Baba Sri Chand with Sikh Gurus developed during the time of Guru Hargobind when he chose Baba Gurditta, the married man and a son of Guru Hargobind for preaching those doctrines. Baba Gurditta in his *Matra* establishes Guru Nanak as, the Guru of Baba Sri Chand. The historical facts prove that Sri Chand was not having good relations with Guru Angad Dev and it was Guru Amar Das who emphatically separated *Udāsīs* from the Sikhs.<sup>13</sup>

Out of thirteen *Matras* <sup>14</sup> of Baba Sri Chand, the first is considered to be the most important. *Udāsī Sants* and followers learn it by heart and daily recite it. Though it is brief in size but it has got a meaningful substance and conveys the essence of the whole context. The introductory part of the *Matras* conveys that Sri Chand was destined to be a *Sanyasi* and was initiated by the *Satguru*, who directed him to come to the Civic State of the world. The proof of the *Udāsī* claim is presented and explained in the main body of the *Matra*. The concluding part gives the reader the final thought on the subject. The feelings of National consciousness, social upliftment and the desire to uplift the village society can be seen in the writings of Sri Chandra's *Matra Shastra*. The *Matra Shastras* contains solution to many contemporary problems. This Shastra gives simple and understandable version of some complicated spiritual traditions and questions so that the general public may obtain fullest knowledge of complicated and hard to understand spiritual intentions, to attain eternal bliss and enjoy human life with full contentment.

ਕਹੁਰੇ ਬਾਲ ਕਿਨ ਮੁੰਡਿਆ, ਕਿਨ ਮੁੰਡਾਇਆ ।।  
ਕਿਸ ਕਾ ਭੋਜਿਆ, ਨਗਰੀ ਆਇਆ ।।  
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੁੰਡਿਆ, ਲੇਖ ਮੁੰਡਾਇਆ ।  
ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਭੋਜਿਆ, ਨਗਰੀ ਆਇਆ ।

This conversation makes it clear that when Baba Sri Chand went to celibate Shiv Ratri at Achal Batala the aged Sidhas were inquired from Sri Chand about his Guru who gave him Guru Mantra (*Moonda-* initiated him into the sect) and had brought him into the *Udāsī* fold. (*Moondaayaa*). Sri Chand replied with great courage and humility ignoring the disrespectful uttering's of these aged ascetics that he had come to the city (*Nagri*) with the permission of his Guru (*Sadguru* and guide)

<sup>13</sup> J.D Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 44; John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, MS No. 75, Bhai Gurdas library, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, ff 516-519ab; Rattan Faujdar, Yogeshwar Guru Ganeshwar, p. 30 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Samprdaye ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 67; Also see, Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, pp. 506-516.

who had asked him to proceed to the city keeping in mind the contemporary, disturbed environment and said that he was ready as per the dictates (*Lekh*) by his *Sadguru*.<sup>15</sup>

ਚੇਤੋ ਨਗਰੀ, ਤਾਰੋ ਗਾਮ ।  
ਅਲਖ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਾ, ਸਿਮਰੋ ਨਾਮ ॥

He removed all the misgivings from the minds of the *Sidhas* and assured his followers that he had come to fulfill three vows i.e. to alert (*chetahu*) the general public and the simple hearted people of the cities who were dozing in deep slumber; to help them swim across (*tarahu*) the ocean of worldly passions and illusions; and to meditate (*Simrahu naam*) and make people meditate the sacred name of the *Alakh Purush* (formless God), the omnipotent and invisible God to remind people of his all invading presence. The purpose of his visit was to awaken the people to the realities of *Nam*. Baba Sri Chand devoted his long life to meditation, preaching *Nam* and morals, spiritual and religious uplift of society, helping the poor, the down-trodden and those in need:

ੴ ਗੁਰ ਅਵਨਾਸੀ ਖੋਲ ਰਚਾਇਆ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਅਗਮ ਨਿਗਮ ਕਾ ਪੰਥ ਬਤਾਇਆ ॥ ੧ ॥

This Universe has been created according to the will of Almighty, *Avinashi* (imperishable)<sup>16</sup>. He has set in motion all the play in this world and has engaged different actors for different roles to play. Sri Chand is thankful to his Guru for showing him the path of *Agam* (difficult to tread, where one cannot reach easily) and *Nigam* (*Vedas*).

<sup>15</sup> Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek*, Sakhar Sind, 1941, pp. 12-13; L.P. Upadhyayae, “Matra Vani ka Vedic Sandesh”, *Shri Chandra Tatva Darshan*, Shantanand Udasin, (ed.), *Shri Chandra Tatva Darshan*, Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, 1994, p. 127; Also see, Manmohan Sehgal, “Udasin Matra Sahitya tatha Gurvani”, *Shri Chandra Tatva Darshan*, Shantanand Udasin, (ed.), *Shri Chandra Tatva Darshan*, Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, 1994, pp. 143-148; Hukam Chand Rajpal, “Matra Vani : Mul Pratipad”, Shantanand Udasin, (ed.), *Shri Chandra Tatva Darshan*, Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, 1994, pp. 162-166; Manmohan Sehgal, “Shrimad Bhagwad Geeta tatha Matra Sahib”, Shantanand Udasin, (ed.), *Shri Chandra Tatva Darshan*, Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, 1994, pp. 180-189.

<sup>16</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, Manuscript No. 75, ff 516ab; Also see, Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 12-17; Hukam Chand Rajpal, “Shri Matra Bani da Mul Pratipad”, *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, (ed.), Gurnam Kaur, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 29. Many consider *Avinashi Muni* as Guru of Baba Sri Chand. But others like Mahant Anantanand do not go with the above view and believe that *Avinashi Muni* stands for the Almighty who is *Nirgun*, *Nirakar*, *Avinashi*, *Sarbvapiak*, *Sarbshaktiman* and is present in the universe. In other words the *Avinashi* is one of the many attributes of Universal Godhead: Shantanand Udasin, (ed.), *Sri Chand Tatva Darshan*, Udasin Ashram, Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, 1994, pp. 2, 28, 44, 64, 66, 68, 125, 126; Also see, ‘Jasbir Singh Sabar, “Udasi Sampardaye: Udbhav Ate Vikas”, Gurnam Kaur, (ed.), *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 51; Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 16-17.

ਗਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਗੋਦੜੀ ਖਿਮਾਂ ਕੀ ਟੋਪੀ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਜਤ ਦਾ ਆੜਬੰਦ ਸੀਲ ਲੰਗੋਟੀ ॥ 2 ॥

One must put on *godri* (jacket made up of patched up cloth) of self knowledge, a cap, (*topi*)<sup>17</sup> of forgiveness (*khima*), and a tag of high character. The subjection of passion (*yat*) is my *Aadband* (cover). Sri Chand advises to wear *Langoti* or loin cloth (to cover private parts) made of *Sheel* (good conduct). In the above lines the stress is laid on implementation of *gyan*, *khima*, *jat*, *sheel*, and *sat*, by the devotee, a true attributes of a *Udāsī Sadh*.

ਅਕਾਲ ਖੰਬਾ ਨਿਰਾਸ ਝੋਲੀ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਜੁਗਤ ਕਾ ਟੋਪ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਝੋਲੀ ॥ 3 ॥

God is *Akal* (indestructible), beyond the boundaries of death and time. He is the creator of time so out of bounds for time. Such *Khintha* (patched cloth) is for ever and is imperishable. This *Khintha* keeps me free from all bondages. Sidhas keep a bag or *jholi* to collect alms. Sri Chand says that his *jholi* is *Niraash* (desireless, empty) and a heart devoid of all desires. He has worn the *tope* (cap) of *yukti* (tactics) of being one with the creator. The language spoken by Guru is *Gurmukhi boli* (language) and not the Punjabi language.

ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਚੋਲਾ ਸਤ ਕੀ ਸੇਲੀ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਮਰਯਾਦ ਮੇਖਲੀ ਲੈ ਗਲੇ ਮੇਲੀ ॥ 4 ॥

Religion is my *chola* (attire/cloak), *sat* (righteous or truth) through mind thought and deeds, *seli* (sacred thread of black wool) around the neck by the Nirvana saints. Nothing is greater than the truth itself. Sri Chand said he had adopted *Maryada* (rules of good conduct), and *Mekhlaa* (griddle belt) in place of *Kafni* (shirt made of cloth). Decorum and self restriction is my griddle.

ਧਿਆਨ ਕਾ ਬਟੂਆ ਨਿਰਤ ਕਾ ਸੁਈ ਦਾਨ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅੰਚਲਾ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ॥ 5 ॥

I keep the *batua* (purse) of *dhian* (meditation) always with me. He calls *Brahma* (God) as his *Anchlaa* (cover, protector). Sri Chand has explained ethics and morality as *kafni*, concentration (*dhian*) as *Batua* and detachment as *Mor Chhad*.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, MS No. 75, ff 516ab; also see, Hukam Chand Rajpal, “Shri Matra Bani da Mul Pratipad”, Gurnam Kaur, (ed.), *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekh*, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 30; Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>18</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, Manuscript No. 75, ff 516ab; also see, Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon, “Udasin Panth di Sadacharak Niti”, *Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekh*, (ed.), Gurnam Kaur, Punjabi

ਬਹੁ ਰੰਗ ਮੋਰ ਛੜ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਦਿਸ਼ਟੀ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਨਿਰਭਉ ਜੰਗ ਡੋਰਾ ਨਾ ਕੋ ਦੁਸ਼ਟੀ ॥ 6 ॥

*Nirlep* (Unattachedness) is my whisk, *mor chhad* (a whisk made of peacock feathers for flapping away flies). To tie up such a divine whisk one needs a *Jang dora* (a thread with which the peacock whisk is tied), of *Nirbhav* (without fear). This state of fearless love is our string to tie the *mor chhad* of divine nature. This *mor chhad* is free from *Naakoo* (worldly contamination) *dushti* (malice towards none).

ਜਾਪ ਜੰਗੋਟਾ ਸਿਫਤ ਉਡਾਨੀ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਸਿੰਝੀ ਸਬਦ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਗੁਰੂਬਾਣੀ ॥ 7 ॥

To *jaap* (meditate) for welfare of others is my *jangota* (underwear of deer skin covering the thighs), and *sift* (praise) of God almighty is my *Udaani* (flight). *Singi* (blow made of animal horn) is the mystical sound or *anahad shabd* (unheard sound that the yogis try to hear in their *Smadhi*), and the teachings of my Guru is *Guruvaani* for me.

ਸ਼ਰਮ ਕੀ ਮੁੰਦ੍ਰਾ, ਸਿਵ ਵਿਭੂਤਾ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਾਨੀ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੁਤਾ ॥ 8 ॥

The pleasure of attainment of one's self form is my *Mudra* (ear ring)<sup>19</sup>. Sri Chand advised the seeker to wear the *mudra* of *sharam* (grace/ modesty), the *vibhoota* (ash) of *Shiva* (welfare concept) which acts as mind soother. It purifies the innerself and marches towards the great life. *Hari Bhakti* (devotion to God) is my *Mrigani* (deer skin). *Bhakti* is the instrument to attain *darshan*. Sri Chand cautions that mere sitting on spread deer skin does not qualify a seeker to have a glimpse of almighty meaning the deer skin is the stair case of devotion which ascends towards almighty.

ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸੂਤ ਵਿਵੇਕ ਧਾਰੇ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਅਨੇਕ ਟੱਲੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਲਾਗੇ ॥ 9 ॥

The *Gyan godri* (jacket made up of patched cloth of pure knowledge) is *soot* (cotton) woven with *dhaagey* (threads) of *santokh* (contentment) and renunciation of *vivek* (judicious assessment) of reasoning of good and bad aspects of life. The *godri* has *anek* (many) *tallis* (patches of rags) of different qualities sewn over it and which

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University Patiala, 1995, p. 83; Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>19</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, Manuscript No. 75, ff 516ab; Also see, Hukam Chand Rajpal, "Shri Matra Bani da Mul Pratipad", Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha*, (ed.), Gurnam Kaur, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 28.

makes it look beautiful. It means a life full of contentment is that cotton cloth upon which the seeker of truth patches up different good qualities with the help of a thread of his judicious brain.<sup>20</sup>

ਸੁਰਤ ਕੀ ਸੂਈ ਲੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੀਵੇ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਜੋ ਰਾਖੇ ਸੋ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਥੀਵੇ । 10 ।।

The *suyi* (needle) of *surat* (meditation or recollection) is procurable from the real *sadguru* with which *godri* of knowledge is stiched (*seevey*). The seeker who wears (*raakhey*) becomes (*theevey*) free of fears (*nirbhau*) of world, fear of rebirth and death.

ਸ਼ਾਹ ਸੁਪੈਦ, ਜ਼ਰਦ ਸੁਰਖਾਈ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਜੋ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਭਾਈ ।। 11 ।।

The *sadhus* wearing *siyaah* (black), *sufaid* (white), *zarad* (yellow or ochre colour) and *surkhaayee* (red) are four colours of four Varans (*Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra*) are all brothers by virtue of precept oral affinity. Means, a *Sadhu* may wear (*pahire*) any of these four colours may be from any caste or creed is welcome to Sri Chand's fraternity (*Guru Bhai*). His above *Matra* indicates towards idea of universal brotherhood and fraternity. According to him, God created man and society as a whole. He wanted to end up the bickerings of the society and to follow the path of humanity. For Him all are one. He desires that human being in the society should also live under the same terms and conditions without falling into the false beliefs of caste and creed. He believed that originally there existed no such difference between the human beings. It was man made and as such it should be done away with.

ਤ੍ਰੈਗੁਣ ਚਕਮਕ ਅਗਨ ਮਥ ਪਾਈ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਧੁਣੀ ਦੇਹ ਜਲਾਈ ।। 12 ।।

We lit (*Jalai*) the fire of *Sukh* (pleasures) and *dukh* (pains) within our *deh* (body) with the help of *chakamak* (striking fire stones) of the *trehgun* (three basic qualities) *Rajo*, *Sato* and *Tamogun*. In this sacred *dhuni* (fire) burn the pleasures and pain along with the seeds of earned deeds so that there remains no hope of future birth and death for you.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, Manuscript No. 75, ff 517ab; Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon, "Udasin Panth di Sadacharak Niti", Udasin Samprada da Akadmik Paripek, (ed.), Gurnam Kaur, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 83; Harinam Das Udasin, Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek, p. 31.*

<sup>21</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, Manuscript No. 75, ff 517ab; Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon, "Udasin Panth di Sadacharak Niti", Udasin Samprada da Akadmik Paripek, (ed.) Gurnam Kaur, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 83; Harinam Das Udasin, Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek, pp. 31-32.*

ਸੰਜਮ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਧਾਰੀ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਚਰਨ ਕੰਵਲ ਮਹਿ ਸੁਰਤ ਹਮਾਰੀ ॥ 13 ॥

To work with *sayyam* (contentment or self control) is our *kapali* (begging bowl) and our *surat* (meditation or concentration) is always upon the *charan-kamal* (lotus feet) of my lord.

ਭਾਉ ਭੋਜਨ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕਰ ਪਾਇਆ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਭਲਾ ਬੁਰਾ ਨਹੀ ਮੰਨ ਵਸਾਇਆ ॥ 14 ॥

I have taken the *bhojan* (food) of good intentions and it has worked like *amrit* (nectar) for me. It has not given me the idea of being of good taste or bad taste. In the *Matra*, Sri Chand explains the importance of food. He says that one should take food for the body requirement and not for the sake of taste of the tongue. In other words it means the simplicity of man in life.

ਪਾਤਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਫਰੂਆ ਬਹੂ ਗੁਣਾ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਕਰਮੰਡਲ ਤੂੰਬਾ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਘਣਾ ॥ 15 ॥

The utensils of *Sadhs* are made of wood and mud like *Karmandal*, *Tumba* and *Kishti*. The above utensils mentioned by Sri Chand are the symbols and real property of an ascetic. It helps him in his religious journey to prepare food and to accumulate water in time of need.

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਉਦਿਕ ਮਨ ਦਇਆ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਜੋ ਜੀਵੇ ਸੋ ਸੀਤਲ ਭਇਆ ॥ 16 ॥

A pure mind is a *pyalaa* (a cup) for drinking *amrit* (nectar) of God's name. Whosoever, *jo peevey* (drinks) the *amrit of Guru's* teachings is relieved of the worldly heat and is liberated. He attains eternal peace in a befitting manner.

ਇੜਾ ਸੇ ਆਵੈ ਪਿੰਗਲਾ ਮੈਂ ਪਾਵੈ । (f.੫੧੭)

ਸੁਖਮਨਾ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਸਹਿਜ ਸਮਾਵੈ ॥ 17 ॥

The real power, the vital breath moves in *ida* and *pingala* and resides in *shushumana* (three important nerves described by the *hathyogi*). Thus describes the general theory of *pranayaam*. To let in the breadth through *ida* nerve to hold it for some time and then release it through the opening of *pingala* nerve. This way with the practice of *purak* (to fill in) and *rechak* (let out) one is able to open the door of

*sushman* nerve. This practice helps the seeker to hold him is *sehaj* (equilibrium) position.<sup>22</sup>

ਨਿਰਾਸ ਮਠ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਧਿਆਨ । (f. ੫੧੭)

ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਗਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਪਕ ਗਿਆਨ ॥ 18 ॥

We should desirelessly contemplate in the pessimistic monastery of his name. the seeker lives in the *Math* (house) of mind, which is *niraash* (desireless calm), practices *smadhi* and *dhian* meditates continuously (*nirantar*) on the inseparable soul, resides in the city of God (*Brahm nagri*) devoid of darkness of ignorance and enlightened by the light provided (*Gyan*) by the Guru who has experienced God himself.

ਅਸਿਬਰ ਰਿਧ ਅਮਰਪਦ ਦੰਡਾ ॥ (f. ੫੧੮)

ਧੀਰਜ ਫਹੁੜੀ ਤਪ ਕਰ ਖੰਡਾ ॥ 19 ॥

Stability of mind (*Sthir*) is seekers prosperity (*Ridhi*). Immortality (*amarpad*) is our stuff made of wood (*danda*). *Dheeraj* (patience) is our (*Fahuri*) is our axe and penance (*tap*) is our *khanda* (a double edged sword).

ਵਸ ਕਰ ਆਸਾ ਸਮ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਚੋਗਾਨ । (f. ੫੧੯)

ਹਰਥ ਸੋਗ ਮਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਨ ॥ 20 ॥

To subdue the ten organs is our *aasaa* (wooden stuff), equanimity (*sumdrishti*) that negates the thoughts of jubilation and bereavement that equipoise is our support (*chogaan*) that puts to end the idea of joy and sadness (*harsh shokh*).

ਸਹਿਜ ਵੈਰਾਗੀ ਕਰੇ ਵੈਰਾਗ । (f. ੫੨੦)

ਮਾਯਾ ਮੋਹਣੀ ਸਗਲ ਤਿਆਗ ॥ 21 ॥

*Mohini* (alluring) *maya* (worldly attachments and attraction) makes man miserable. A detached person becomes happy after coming out of web of *maya* (*tyaag*). Only such person can work for the progress and welfare of the society and country. Worldly desires, maya, lust for women and worldly possessions, laziness, anger and egoism were to be replaced by humility, sacrifice, truthfulness, kindness, contentment and strong will power.

ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਪਾਖਰ ਪਵਨ ਕਾ ਘੋੜਾ । (f. ੫੨੧)

ਨਿਹ ਕਰਮ ਜੀਨ ਤਤ ਕਾ ਜੋੜਾ ॥ 22 ॥

<sup>22</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, MS No. 75, ff 517,518ab; Sita Ram Chaturvedi, *Yog Vidha aur Kundlini Chalan*, Gobind Dham, Bombay, 2000, pp. 90-110; Harinam Das Udasin, *Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek*, pp. 35-39.

The name of God works like *Paakhar* (a stick), a *kavach* (shield) or an amulet, for such a renounces. We should control the horse of breathing with the bridle of detachment from evil deeds. *Karma* (deeds) does not tie up a person but it is the desire behind that deed that proves to be a catch hold. Desireless deeds are like the saddle of the horse. In order to fix the bridle of detachment of deeds some kind of belt (*tang*) is needed. So we have to provide a belt of *tatva- ka -joda* (belt of leather which joins) the horse (of breath) and bridle (of detachment of deeds) and hold them together. God helps to keep them together.

ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਢਾਲ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਕਮਾਨ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਅਕਲ ਸੰਜੋਯ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੇ ਬਾਨ ॥ 23 ॥

The *nirgun* (unattributed) God is our *dhaal* (shield) Guru's *shabad* (word) is our bow, *Akal* (intellect) acts as an amulet to save us from attacks of ignorance and *preet* (love) of god acts as a *baan* (arrow)

ਅਕਲ ਕੀ ਬਰਛ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਕੀ ਕਟਾਰੀ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਮਨ ਕੋ ਮਾਰ ਅਸਵਾਰੀ ॥ 24 ॥

Using a *barchhi* (small dagger) of intelligence and *kataari* (stiletto) for self defense of qualities one can win over (*man ko maar*) the passions and allurements of mundane nature. All this war is against the mind, which has to be over powered with the help of the spiritual power.

ਬਿਖਮ ਗੜ ਤੋੜ ਨਿਹਭਉ ਘਰ ਆਵੇ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਨੌਬਤ ਸੰਖ ਨਗਾਰਾ ਵਾਵੈ ॥ 25 ॥

Such a devotee breaks (*tod*) the *visham* (odd difficult to traverse) fortress (*garh*) of worldly illusion and returns to his *ghar* (his eternal home) fearlessly (*nirbhau*). He is greeted there with pomp and show and with the beat of *naubat*, *shankh* and *nagara* (beat of drums counc shells and kettle drums).

ਗੁਰ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ਸੂਖਮ ਵੇਦ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਨਿਰਬਾਣ ਵਿਦਿਯਾ ਆਪਰ ਭੇਦ ॥ 26 ॥

Only the immoral preceptor (*Avinashi*) Guru knows all the secrets and intricacies of this knowledge of salvation the *nirvana vidya*.

ਅਖੰਡ ਜਨੇਊ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਧੋਤੀ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਸੋਹੰ ਜਾਪ ਸਚ ਮਾਲ ਪਰੋਤੀ ॥ 27 ॥



Our *Janeu* (sacred thread) is *Akhand* (unbreakable), our *dhoti* (lower cloth) is spotless. We worship the *Sohang Mantra* (the basic maxim of the *Vedantic* philosophy identifying the individual with the Supreme being on the beads of truth.

ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਮੰਤਰ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਨਾਮ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਨਿਸਚਲ ਆਸਨ ਕਰ ਬਿਸਰਾਮ ॥ 28 ॥

The teachings imparted by Guru is an important aspect of learning in the life of a Sadhu. It is the Guru who gives the name (*Naam ka Jaap*). The knowledge attained through the learning and recitation of *Gayatri* Mantra will lead one to a blissful and permanent abode.

ਤਿਲਕ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਤਰਪਣ ਜਸ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਪੂਜਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭੋਗ ਮਹਾ ਰਸ ॥ 29 ॥

Concentration of mind in God's name is the ornamental religious *tilak* (vermillion mark) on our forehead. *Yash* (fame and glory) is offering of water to our deceased ancestors as *tarpan* (a mark of gratification). *Prem* (love) is our worship (*puja*). *Maha Ras* (eternal bliss) is our *bhog* (food).

ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਸੰਧਿਆ ਦਰਸਨ ਛਾਪਾ । (f. ੫੧੮)

ਵਾਦ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਮਿਟਾਵੈ ਆਪਾ ॥ 30 ॥

Humanity is our *Sandhya* (prayer), *Darshan* (realization of God) is our *Chhaapaa* (holy imprint or stamp). After acquiring these qualities, a person becomes free from all kinds of controversies (*vaad vivaad*) and attains eternal bliss (*mitavey aapaa*).<sup>23</sup>

ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਪੀਤਾਂਬਰ ਮਨ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਸ਼ਾਲਾ ! (f. ੫੧੮, f. ੫੧੯)

ਚੀਤ ਚਿਤਾਂਬਰ ਰੁਣ ਝੁਣ ਮਾਲਾ ॥ 31 ॥

*Preet* of God (love) is our *Pitambar* (yellow silken cloth) and Man (*mind*) is *Mrigshaala* (deer skin). Meditation in the void of one's mind (*cheet*) on the tunes of *Runjhun* is that unheard sound that Yogis try to hear in their *Samadhi*.

ਬੁੱਧ ਬਾਘੰਬਰ ਕੁਲਾ ਪੋਸਤੀਨ । (f. ੫੧੯)

ਖੋਸ ਖੜਾਵਾ ਏਹ ਤ ਲੀਨ ॥ 32 ॥

The intellect staying in the mental disposition is the *Baghambar* (tiger skin cloth), *Kulla* (high cap worn under the turban) and *Posteen* (a garment of leather

<sup>23</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, Manuscript No. 75, ff 518,519ab; Hukam Chand Rajpal, "Shri Matra Bani da Mul Pratipad", Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekha, (ed.) Gurnam Kaur, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 27; Harinam Das Udasin, Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek, pp. 41-46.*

covered with fine wool) *Khauns Kharawan* (wooden sandals) are the symbols of Sadhus or devotee.

ਤੋੜਾ ਚੁਰਾ ਔਰ ਜੰਜੀਰ । (f. ੫੧੯)

ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹ ਫਕੀਰ ॥ 33 ॥

*Udāsī Munis* could move about according to the time and the country of their choice wearing *Choorha* (a lock of hair on the top of head by an ascetic), and breaking (*tora*) all the bonds shackles (*Janzir*) of outer sectarian symbols. Sri Chand in this *Matra* refers to his father respectfully as *Nanak Shah Faquir*.<sup>24</sup>

ਜਟਾ ਜੂਟ ਮੁਕਟ ਸਿਰ ਹੋਇ । (f. ੫੧੯)

ਮੁਕਤਾ ਫਿਰੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੋਇ ॥ 34 ॥

By locking his matted hair rolled up over the head (*Jatta Joot*) like a crown (*Mukut*). He undoes (*Mukta*) all the bondages (*Bandhan*) of rebirth and attain salvation.

ਨਾਨਕ ਪੂਤਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਬੋਲੇ (f. ੫੧੯)

ਜੁਗਤ ਪਛਾਣੇ ਤਤਿ ਵਿਰੋਲੇ ॥ 35 ॥

By way of conclusion we can say that these words and *Mantras* for salvation (*Jugat*) have been spoken by Sri Chand, son of Guru Nanak (*Nanak Poota*)<sup>25</sup> for the salvation of mankind.

ਐਸੀ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਕੋਇ । (f. ੫੧੯)

ਆਵਾ ਗਵਨ ਮਿਟਾਵੇ ਸੋਇ ॥ 36 ॥

Whosoever worships this *Matra* with true devotion should surely attain *Aava Gaman* (*Nirvan*- the extinction).<sup>26</sup> Baba Sri Chand stressed that spiritualism and understanding oneself were essential for the uplift of humanity. Spiritual pursuit and self improvement were especially stressed by Sri Chand.

Various expositions of the *Bani* of the Sikh Gurus in the *Adi-Granth* written by *Udāsī* scholars are an indication of their attempt to show their affiliation to early

<sup>24</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand, Manuscript No. 75, ff 519ab; Hukam Chand Rajpal, "Shri Matra Bani da Mul Pratipad", Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekh, (ed.) Gurnam Kaur, p. 30; Harinam Das Udasin, Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ji Ki Matra Steek, p. 47.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid., ff 519ab; Also see, Hukam Chand Rajpal, "Shri Matra Bani da Mul Pratipad", Udasi Samprada da Akadmik Paripekh, (ed.) Gurnam Kaur, p. 30 ; Harinam Das Udasin, Jagad Guru Sri Chander Ki Matra Steek, pp. 48-49.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid., ff 519ab; Also see, Jeevan Prakash Jeevan, Matra Makrand, (Tr. Gian Inder Singh) Pritam Prakashan, Amritsar, 1978, pp. 30-88; Also see, Mahant Anata Nanad, Bhagwan Sri Chandra: Some Teachings, (tr. Gian Inder Singh) Pritam Prakashan, Amritsar, 1994, pp. 35-38.*

Sikh tradition.<sup>27</sup> The *Udāsīs* appeared to be more closer to the main stream than the *Minas*, *Dhirmalias* and the *Ram Rayias*.<sup>28</sup>

The *Matra Shastra* of Baba Sri Chand holds the key position in the annunciations of a novice to the *Udāsī* fold. They embody entire code of discipline for the followers. In his teachings Baba Sri Chand laid stress on inner-qualities of life, rather than on the outward forms and symbols.<sup>29</sup> The Main emphasis is on development of a keen mind, reason, right consciousness and fearlessness. The followers are advised to rise above every kind of bias, prejudice, ill will and discrimination. He commended the ideal of service to humanity or *Sevabhav* to all. The *Matras* of Baba Sri Chand, the *Udāsīs* believed, had same importance as the *Japuji* of Guru Nanak.<sup>30</sup> Sri Chand and his followers showed complete reverence to the *Adi Granth* of the Sikhs.<sup>31</sup> Though the *Granth Sahib* is revered by the *Udāsīs*, their interpretation of the Sikhism is *Vedantic*. The usage of concepts like cosmos, god, *maya*, *jeev*, *atma*, *vikar*, *pap*, *punya*, *dukh*, *karam*, *bhakti*, *guru*, *bairagi*, *Udāsī*, *mukti*, *avagaman* etc., are evidence of *Udāsī* response to *Vedantic* impact. The *Matras* revolve around the basic issues of the traditional convention of the *Udāsī* Order. This *Matra* explicitly conveys the philosophic and metaphysical elements of the faith of the *Udāsīs* as well as the gospel of Baba Sri Chand, a commentary explaining the significance of the Guru in the *Udāsī* system and the basic requirements and the attributes of the *Udāsīs*.<sup>32</sup>

The other writers of the seventeenth century who contributed to the *Udāsī* literature are **Baba Gurditta, Balu Hasna, Meharban, Gurdas Dakhni and Hariya**. The *Matra*'s attributed to Baba Gurditta (the eldest son of Guru Hargobind) is composed to the glory of Guru Nanak, who has been depicted as the supreme lord of the eighty four Naths (*Yogis*).<sup>33</sup> Balu Hasna composed of *Matra* on the metaphysics of Baba Sri Chand and the *Udāsī* code of conduct (*Rahet Mariyada*). The text of the

<sup>27</sup> The *Udasi* commentaries of the *Bani* of the Sikh Gurus written towards the close of eighteenth century are available in Anand Ghan *Udasi, GurBani Tike*, (ed. Rattan Singh Jaggi), Punjab Vibhasha Vibhag Patiala, 1970. It includes the *Udasi* version of *Japuji* of Guru Nanak, *Siddh Gosht Anand* and *Asa di Var*. Another commentary of the *Japuji*, as *Japuji Steek* was written by Parmanand in Hindi in 1850s. Amar Das *Udasi* also wrote a commentary of *Sukhmani* known as *Maniprabha*: Sulakhan Singh, "Teachings of Baba Sri Chand", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 78-79.

<sup>28</sup> J.S. Grewal, "The Dissidents", *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, p. 52-63.

<sup>29</sup> *Matre Baba Sri Chand*, Manuscript No. 75, ff 515<sup>ab</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Sant Rein *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript, 1858, AD; f 310<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 1858, AD; ff 1-320<sup>ab</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Madanjit Kaur, "Udasi Matras", *Seminar Papers on Baba Sri Chand Ji*, p 33.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

*Matra* of Balu Hasna is based on the theory of *Avatar Vaad*. Meharban wrote *Sukhmani* which is famous amongst the *Udāsī Sants*. The name Sukhmani resembles with the work of Guru Arjan Dev, but the context is different. Baba Gurdas (Dakhni), belonged to Almast *Dhuan* and wrote *Matra shastra*. His *Matra Shastra* throws light on the history of the *Udāsī* sect and on the life of *Udāsī Saints*.<sup>34</sup> Hariya's<sup>35</sup> only available work is *Granth Hariya Ji Ka*, which seems to have been written by one of his followers. This huge *Granth* of 694 pages, organized according to musical *Raag Raaginis* like the composition arrangement done in the *Adi Granth*, can be seen at Baluana dera. Much of his work resembles the *Bani* of The *Adi Granth*. The year written on his *Granth* is *samvat* 1735. Hariya has mentioned Babar and Humayun, in his work which forces us to believe that he was a contemporary of Guru Nanak. His work shows the influence of Punjabi language.<sup>36</sup>

## II

Eighteenth century poets included **Sant Rein, Girdhar, Surat Ram, Ishwar Das, Rattan Hari, Anandghan etc. Sant Rein** (1741-1871 AD) with his maximum writings dominates the eighteenth century writers. Poet Sant Rein of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, is said to have been born in 1741 and died in 1871<sup>37</sup> Information about his initiation into *Udāsī* tradition is not known. In his *Nanak Vijay Granth*<sup>38</sup> which he started writing at Balapur Peeth in Akola district in Madhya

<sup>34</sup> Beginning his *Matra* with Sri Chand, he describes how universe was created. He has given detailed description about the *Udasi* Guru Tradition (Guru Prampra) and its development. After describing how Sri Chand established four *Dhuans*. Baba Gurdas writes that the *Udasis* should have firm belief in *Jata, Bhasam, Chimta, Chippi, Khons, Kharawaan, Bahagva* (Gerua or ochre) *Vastra*. Baba Gurdas writes that Ram Chandra also spent 12 years as an *Udasi* and Kaushik Muni who gave knowledge (*Gyan*) to Ram Chandra was also an *Udasi*. He also wrote *Rehat Nama* known as *Matra Udas Sampardaya* in 1698 A.D. Randhir Singh, *Udasi Sikhan di Vithiya*, pp. 108-110. Also see "Baba Gurdas Matra", Chopaye 35, 36 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 70-72.

<sup>35</sup> His earlier name could be Hari Das Hari Chand or Hari Mal. Hari Das was born in 1720 Smvat i.e. 1663 AD. He was a Jat from Baluana in Bhatinda. See Chander Kant Bali, Punjab Prantiya Hindi, Sahitya Ka Itihas, p.303, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 178.

<sup>36</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 179.

<sup>37</sup> The total period of Sant Rein comes to be 130 years which seems to be doubtful. Regarding the birth and parentage of Sant Rein, Piara Singh Padam has recorded some facts and traditions in his monograph. According to one tradition he was born in Punjab in Sangatpura Village, in Amritsar district. Another view is that he was born at Srinagar in Kashmir. He was born to parents Pandit Harivallabh and Savitri Devi; Piara Singh Padam, *Mahatma Sant Rein*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1978, pp. 1-2; Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, Dehradun, 1967, p. 68; Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp 81-82.

<sup>38</sup> *Nanak Vijay Granth, Manuscript*, Mangl Khand, f. 37 :

ਸਭ ਨਾਮਨ ਸਿਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ, ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਕਰਤਾਰ ।  
ਆਦਿ ਦਯੋ ਗੁਰ ਮੋਹਿ ਸੋ, ਪਰਮ ਸੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ।

Pradesh and completed it at Bhudan, Malerkotla<sup>39</sup>, Sant Rein claims himself to be a disciple of Baba Sahib Das. The line of succession of Bhudan is (1)Sant Rein (2)*Mahant* Ram Saran (3)*Mahant* Madan Gopal (4)*Mahant* Mukat Ram is the present incumbent. It is said that Sant Rein was 15<sup>th</sup> *Mahant* in succession to Sri Chand.<sup>40</sup>

As a poet laureate and a missionary, **Sant Rein** propagated his mission far and wide through his poetical compositions and also establishing numerous *Udāsī* centres.<sup>41</sup> About two dozen literary compositions are ascribed to Sant Rein by Piara Singh Padam.<sup>42</sup> *Sri Mat Nanak Vijay Granth, Man Parbodh, AnBhai Amrit, Shri Guru Nanak Bodh, Udasi Bodh, Bachan Sangreh, Guru Mehma, Gur Gian Mahatam, Vairag Chhand, Gian Chhand, Guru Sikh Santha Phalroop Bhajan, Dohre Sadh Reet ke, Rajneeti, Kaya Mahatam, Dohre Siddhant ke, Shabad, Kabitt Magan Ras Bhed ke, Rekhte, Jhulne, Majhan, Sadhan De Lakhna Dian Majhan. Siharfian* and *Guru Sikh Sambad*(vartik adi). Among these, the most prominent ones are *Nanak Vijay Granth, Man Parbodh, Nanak Bodh, Udasi Bodh* and *Siharfian*<sup>43</sup> Out of these, four *Siharfian*<sup>44</sup> and more than 150 *Majhan*<sup>45</sup> are all in Punjabi.

As a source of history, the *Udasi Bodh* contains valuable information on early nineteenth century *Udāsīs* as well as the contemporaneous society and culture of the Punjab. Its historical significance also lies in the fact that, Sant Rein, being an *Udāsī*

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ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੋ ਹਰਿ ਆਪ ਦਯੋ, ਸਚਖੰਡ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਭ ਆਪ ਸਿਧਯੋ  
ਗੁਰ ਆਦਿ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਤੋ ਅਭਿਨੰਦਨ, ਲੇ ਕਰ ਸੋ ਜਬ ਬਾਹਰ ਆਯੋ ।  
ਸੁਭ ਕੋ ਪੁਨ ਅੰਗਦ ਕੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ, ਆਪ ਸੁ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਆਦਿ ਸੁਨਾਯੋ ।  
ਤਿਨ ਕੋ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੋਇ ਦਯੋ, ਗੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾਸ ਸੁ ਮੋਹਿ ਬਤਾਯੋ ।

I have personally seen copy of *Sri Mat Nanak Vijay Granth*, (MS, 1848), through the courtesy of the present incumbent, *Mahant* Mukat Ram of the Sadhu Sant Rein Ashram (on May 16, 2006), village Bhudan, in Sangrur district of Punjab.

<sup>39</sup> Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, Sahitya Sadan, Dehradun, 1967, p. 72.

<sup>40</sup> The list of earlier Mahants as follow; 1. Sri Chandra, 2. Gurditta, 3. Balu Hasna, 4. Brahm Das, 5. Manas Das, 6. Sema Das, 7. Ram Chera Das, 8. Ram Das, 9. Duli Chand Das, 10. Kanda Das, 11. Gurduel Das, 12. Phul Das, 13. Gulab Das, 14. Sahib Das, 15. Sant Rein: Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, pp. 74,75.

<sup>41</sup> Presently about 150 *bighas* land is attached to Bhudan *dera* for its maintenance. At Hilani in Sindh, Pakistan, he established three *deras*, and one *dera* was established at Gujranwala, Pakistan. The Mahants of Gujranwala *dera* received two villages in *dharmarth*, revenue free land grant from Maharaja Ranjit Singh for the maintenance of this *dera*.<sup>41</sup> One more *dera* established outside Punjab by Sant Rein is Balapurpeeth in Akola district of Maharashtra. The most important is *Udasi dera* at Bhudan, which still exists in his name as ‘Sadhu Sant Rein Ashram’. The present incumbent of the Dera is *Mahant* Mukat Ram. His literary works are extant either in the Bhudan Dera or at Balapurpeeth. Many of these were written towards the end of the nineteenth century.

<sup>42</sup> Piara Singh Padam, *Mahatma Sant Rein*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1970 p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>44</sup> Rattan Singh Jaggi, *Sahit Kosh*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1989, p. 286.

<sup>45</sup> This is poetical composition in Punjabi where the explanation of *Birha* (Separation) is given more importance and space. *Manjh* is also the name of a ‘*raag*’.

Literary figure of eminence was well acquainted with the *Udāsī* tradition as he himself had witnessed it gaining much popularity and influence under Sikh rule, especially during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>46</sup> The textual evidence of the *Udasi Bodh*, has not been fully tapped by many a scholars of Sikh history and literature. Among those who are known to have either made its partial or full use for varied purposes are Harbhajan Singh,<sup>47</sup> Piara Singh Padam,<sup>48</sup> Sachidanand Sharma,<sup>49</sup> J.S.Grewal<sup>50</sup> and Sulakhan Singh.<sup>51</sup>

There is textual evidence in the *Udāsī Bodh* that it is the fifth poetic composition of Sant Rein.<sup>52</sup> The other four works written previously include his *Man Parbodh*, *Nanak Vijay*, *Nanak Bodh* and *Bachan Sangreh*.<sup>53</sup> All these five works can be seen at Sant Rein Ashram, Bhudan Ashram. *Udasi Bodh* is a *Braj* work which was completed in 1858.<sup>54</sup> It has thirty two chapters containing 320 folio and 2520 *slokas*. It is in size 14x12 cms. Each folio contains 12 lines.

From the point of view of its literary and historical value, it seems to be more important than any of his other works. Hence, its value as a source for socio-cultural history of the Punjab in general and the diverse beliefs and practices of the *Udāsīs* in particular needs to be underlined.

<sup>46</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 82-83; Also see, Sulakhan Singh, “Society in the eyes of an ascetic of early 19<sup>th</sup> century,” *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala, 2004, pp. 268-272.

<sup>47</sup> Harbhajan Singh, *Gurmukhi Lipi Mein Hindi Kavya : Sohlvin aur starvin Shatabadi*, Bharti Sahitya Mandir, Delhi, 1963.

<sup>48</sup> Piara Singh Padam, *Mahatma Sant Rein*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1970.

<sup>49</sup> Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardai Aur Kavi Sant Rein*.

<sup>50</sup> J.S. Grewal, “Dissidents”, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1982 (revised).

<sup>51</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition* (1999), pp. 82-109.

<sup>52</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasi Sampradaye Ke Hindi Kavi aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 83.

<sup>53</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff 316<sup>b</sup> and 317<sup>a</sup>:

ਪਾਂਚ ਗਰੰਥ ਕਰਾਇ ਗੁਰ ਹਮ ਤੇ ਆਪ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ॥  
ਜੀਵਨ ਕੀ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਹਿਤ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਪ ਸੁ ਮਾਨ ॥  
ਅਝਿਲ ॥ ਮਨ ਪਰਬੋਧ ਗਰੰਥ ਸੁ ਪਰਥਮਿ ਜਾਨਿਐ ॥  
ਦੁਤਿਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਜੈ ਗਰੰਥ ਮਹਾਨਿਐ ।  
ਤ੍ਰਿਤਿਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੋਧ ਗਰੰਥ ਸੁ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਹੋ ਬਚਿਨ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਗਰੰਥ ਸੁ ਚਤੁਰਥ ਮਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਪੰਚਮ ਇਹੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਗਰੰਥ ਬੋਧ ਮਹਾਨਿਐ ॥  
ਜੀਵਨ ਤਰਨਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਸੁ ਖਾਤਰ ਜਾਨਿਐ ॥  
ਔਰ ਪਰੋਜਨ ਨਾਹਿ ਕਰਨਿ ਕਾ ਆਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਹੋ ਜੀਵਨ ਕੀ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਸੁ ਖਾਤਰ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, ff 319<sup>b</sup> and 320<sup>a</sup>:

ਛਪੈ ਛੰਦ ॥ ਸੰਮਤਿ ਉਨੀ ਸੈ ਸੋਲ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੁਨਿ ਬਰਸਿ ਪਛਾਨੇ ॥  
ਪਾਚ ਮਾਸ ਦਿਨ ਪਾਚ ਬਰਸਿ ਤੇ ਕਮ ਪਹਚਾਨੇ ॥  
ਮੰਗਲਵਾਰ ਬਿਜੈ ਦਸਮੀ ਸੁਭ ਘਰੀ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥  
ਭਯੋ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਪੂਰਨ ਤਾਂ ਦਿਨ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਿਚਾਰੇ ॥  
...ਸਮਤਿ ੧੯੧੫।।੨੫।। ਸਲੋਕ ੨੫੨੦ ॥

It is very important to note that the works of Sant Rein including his *Udāsi Bodh* seem to have been much influenced by the sacred literature of both the Hindus and the Sikhs. He was quite well versed in *Sanskrit* and Punjabi languages. The probable sources of his information, therefore, include the *Guru Granth Sahib* of the Sikhs and the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Bhagwad Gita* and the *Shastras* of the Hindus. His compositions also reflect the influence of the sayings and doings of some medieval Indian Sants of known sanctity. There is enough textual evidence to prove that the *Udasi Bodh* reflects the influence of the four *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagwad Gita*. At some places, we can also see the influence of the Hindu epics i.e. the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. These sources seem to have considerably influenced the world view, ideology and philosophy of the poet. As the *Vedas* were not supposed to be the creation of the human beings, their sacred texts were, thus, called the '*Shruti*', meaning thereby that they have got divine character and only the *Rishis* could get them through revelation.<sup>55</sup> Reference to the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Shalokas* from the *Bhagwad Gita* are found here and there in the *Udasi Bodh*.<sup>56</sup> Being a staunch exponent of the *Vedantic* philosophy, Sant Rein often quotes different *slokas* from the *Bhagwad Gita*. Even some of them have been quoted almost in verbatim. For instance, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna that in order to establish the real religious Order on the good earth, he took many rebirths to punish the sinful and to protect the *sants*.<sup>57</sup> As the *Bhagwad Gita* is the basis of the *Vedantic* philosophy, hence Sant Rein often quotes from its sacred text. Some references to the *Upanishads* are also made<sup>58</sup>. The *Udasi Bodh* also reflects the influence of the works

<sup>55</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 224<sup>b</sup>:

ਲਘੁ ਸਲੋਕ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਛੰਦ ॥  
ਮਾਯਾ ਭਾਸੇ ਨ ਜੀਵੀ ਸੋ ਕਰੋਤੀ ॥  
ਇਉ ਸੁ ਤਿਨ ਆਪ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਭਰੋਤੀ ॥  
ਮਾਯਾ ਚਾਵਿਦਿਆ ਚਾਸੁਮਵ ਭਵਤੀ ॥  
ਇਉ ਆਪ ਬੇਦ ਕੀ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਤਿਨ ਬਵਤੀ ॥

<sup>56</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, ff. 258<sup>a</sup> and 262<sup>b</sup>, cf. (*Chhandogya Upanishad*), f.278<sup>b</sup> cf. *Guru Granth Sahib* and *Udasi Bodh*, f. 276<sup>a</sup> and f. 263<sup>a</sup> and 26 (*Bhagwad Gita*)

<sup>57</sup> *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita*, (chapter 4<sup>th</sup> and *Salok* 8<sup>th</sup>), p. 76.

ਸਲੋਕ॥ ਪਰੀਤ੍ਰਾਣਾਯ ਸਾਧੂਨਾ ਵਿਨਾਸਾਯ ਚ ਦੁਸਕ੍ਰਿਤਾ ॥  
ਧਰਮ ਸੰਸਥਾਪਨਾ ਰਥਾਯ ਸੰਭਵਾਮੀ ਜੁਗੇ ਜੁਗੇ ॥  
; cf. *Udasi Bodh*, ff.169<sup>b</sup>:  
ਇਸ ਪਰ ਭਗਵਤਿ ਗੀਤਾ ਕਾ ਪਰਮਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਹੋ ! ਇਉ ਅਰਜਨ ਕੋ ਕਹਿਯੋ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

<sup>58</sup> *Chhandogya Upanishda*, (part 14<sup>th</sup>, mantra 1<sup>st</sup>), p. 264.

ਸਰਵੰ ਖਲਿਵਿਦੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੰਜਲਾਨਿਤਿ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਉਪਾਸੀਤ ॥  
; cf. *Udasi Bodh*, ff.196<sup>b</sup> and 197<sup>a</sup>:  
ਜਿਕੜੇ ਤਿਕੜੇ ਏਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਾਰੇ ॥  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾਲਾ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਆਪ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰੇ ॥

of Medieval *Sants* or the *bhagats* notably Sant Kabir. Sant Rein, no doubt, had a tenacious memory and probably he often did not have the text of many of his authorities with him. That's why he often uses his memory to cite from the religious texts with which his acquaintance or familiarity can not be ruled out altogether, though the quotations he gives from such sources are not always very exact. However, the *Udasi Bodh* stands a witness to the inherited influence of Sant Kabir and his works.<sup>59</sup> Apart from the influence of the medieval Poets, Sant Rein also seems to have been influenced by some other poets of eminence such as, to name a few, Rahim or Ras Khan.<sup>60</sup>

Sant Rein had complete reverence for the Sikh Gurus. The *Udasi Bodh* clearly shows influence of the *Adi Granth*. He has quoted a few lines from the *slokas* of the *Japuji* of Guru Nanak<sup>61</sup> and his *Asa Di Var*<sup>62</sup>. Also a couplet from his *Bani* in *Rag Tilang* is seen quoted by the poet.<sup>63</sup> A few hymns from the *Bani* of Guru Amar Das, the *Anand Sahib*, also find mention in the text of the *Udasi Bodh*. Not only this, Sant Rein also makes a reference to the *Vairag Shatkam* of Bhartari Hari.<sup>64</sup> On the whole, he extensively inherited thoughts and ideas of the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Simaritis*, the medieval Poets of the Bhakti movement and the *Adi Granth*, had certainly re-interpreted them in accordance with his own mental skills and literary acumen. His *Udasi Bodh*, thus, very largely turns out to be a synthesis of the *Vedantic* school of the

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ਖਲੀਂਦ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਆਪ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰੇ ॥  
ਯਤਰਿ ਯਤਰਿ ਮਨ ਜਾਇ ਤਤਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ॥

<sup>59</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 90<sup>a</sup>:  
ਦੋਹਰਾ॥ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭੁਜੰਗਮ ਮਨ ਕਟਿਉ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਰਾਮ ਬਿਯੋਗੀ ਨਾ ਬਚੈ ਬਚੈ ਸੁ ਬਉਰਾ ਹੋਇ ॥

<sup>60</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 86<sup>a</sup>:  
ਲਾਜ ਬਡਾਈ ਮਾਨ ਪਤਿ, ਬਹੁਤ ਦਿਨਨ ਕਾ ਨੇਹੁ  
ਏ ਪਾਂਚੋ ਤਬ ਹੀ ਗਏ ਜਬੈ ਕਹਯੋ ਕਛੁ ਦੇਹੁ ॥

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, f. 319<sup>a</sup>:  
ਸਲੋਕ॥ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਿਤ ਮਹਤੁ ॥  
ਦਿਵਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲੁ ਜਗਤੁ ॥

<sup>62</sup> *Adi Granth*, p. 469 ; cf. *Udasi Bodh*, f. 202<sup>b</sup>:  
ਅਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਜੋਰ ਹੈ ਅਗੈ ਜੀਉ ਨਵੇਇ ॥  
ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਲੇਖੇ ਪਤਿ ਪਾਵੈ ਚੰਗੇ ਸੇਈ ਕੋਇ ॥

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, p. 721 ; cf. *Udasi Bodh*, f. 203<sup>b</sup>:  
ਘੇ ਪਟਿ ਭਾਂਡਾ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਐਸਾ ਭਗਤਿ ਬਰਣ ਮੈ ਹੋਇ ॥

<sup>64</sup> Bhartari Hari, *Vairagya Shatkam*, sloka, 27<sup>th</sup> :  
ਫਲੰ ਸਵੇਸਫਾਲਿਭਿਅੰ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਵਨਮਯੇਦੰ ਕਸ਼ਿਤਿਰੁਹਾਂ  
ਪਯ: ਸਥਾਨੇ-ਸਥਾਨੇ ਸਿਸ਼ਿਰਮਧੁਰੰ ਪੁਣਯਸਰਿਤਾਮ ॥

cf. *Udasi Bodh*, ff.202<sup>b</sup>:  
ਸਲੋਕ॥ਫਲੰ ਸੇਛਾ ਲਭਯੰ ਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਵਨਮ ਖੇਦੰ ਖਿਤਿ ਰੂਹਾਂ ॥  
ਪਯ ਸਥਾਨੇ-ਸਥਾਨੇ ਸਿਸ਼ਿਰ ਪਧੁਰੰ ਪੁੰਨਯ ਸਰਿਤਾ ॥



ancient Indian philosophy and the religious thought of the Sikh Gurus enshrined in the *Adi Granth*.

As regards the purpose of the *Udasi Bodh* Sant Rein claims its religious and social merit by clearly emphasizing its relevance to his contemporaries.<sup>65</sup> As a missionary of the *Udāsī* tradition, he has given enough space to the history of its origin and growth in terms of a *panth*. With a view to this, he emphatically states that Guru Nanak was the founder of *Udāsī Panth*. In his view, Baba Sri Chand and Baba Gurditta, eldest son of Guru Hargobind, besides the earliest known *Udāsīs* of the four *dhuans*, contributed a lot towards the development and expansion of the *Udāsī* movement.

The main objective of the poet, however, remains to give an adequate expression to the *vedantic* school of Indian philosophy. In order to come to the terms with the complex and deep rooted ideas and concepts of the *Vedantic* philosophy, he did follow the style of a dialogue or discourse or the technique of question-answer. If we go by the contents of the religious scriptures of different religions or even if we follow a Hindu classic *Bhagwad Gita*, we find the same old style of question - answer being used. In the *Udasi Bodh*, Sri Chand, as a 'Sikh' (disciple) or a novice raises questions or seeks some queries about the philosophy of life from his father Guru Nanak and the latter is, thus, obliged to give answer to all the philosophical issues. This may become clearer from the following lines quoted from the text in the footnote.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the poet too have been seeking patronage from his contemporary Sikh rulers by way of representing the *Udāsī* tradition as a tradition of the '*Nanakbans*' i.e. the '*Nanakpanthis*', the followers of Guru Nanak.

The *Udasi Bodh* has been divided into thirty two chapters, each containing explanation of some meta-physical ideas and concepts of fundamental importance to

<sup>65</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript 1858, f.1:  
ਗੁਰ ਪਰੇਸ਼ੁਰ ਗੁਰ ਜਗਤਿਸੁਰ ਗੁਰ ਰਖੇਸੁਰ ਰਾਮ ਹਰੇ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਬਿਧਾਤਾ, ਗੁਰ ਸਭਿ ਗਯਾਤਾ ਗਯਾਨ ਭਰੇ ॥  
ਨਿਜ ਬੁਧਿ ਮੰਥੈ ਬਰਨੈ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਪੈਥੈ ਪਾਇ ਪਰੇ ॥  
ਜਿਸ ਸੁਣ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀ ਤਰੈ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ ਗਯਾਨ ਸੁਖਾਨੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਹੈ ॥  
ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰੈ ਭਵ ਨਿਧ ਭਾਰੈ ਪਰੈ ਸੁ ਪਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ ਨ ਹੋ ॥  
ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਨੀਰੈ ਭਰਾ ਸੁ ਬੀਰੈ ਪਰਮ ਗੰਭੀਰੈ ਸਿੰਧ ਅਸੇ ॥  
ਕਾਮ ਕਰੋਧੈ ਬੈਰ ਬਿਰੋਧੈ, ਤਾਹਿ ਨਾ ਕੋਧੈ ਮਾਹਿ ਬਸੇ ॥

<sup>66</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript 1858, f.19<sup>a</sup>:  
ਸਿਖ ਬਚਨਿ ॥ ਕਾਰਣ ਸੁਖਮ ਦੇਹਿ ਦੈ ਸਮਝੀ ਮੋਹਿ ਸੁਜਾਨ  
ਪਰ ਵਿਰਾਟ ਨਹੀ ਸਮਝਿਉ ਕਹੈ ਸੋ ਫੇਰਿ ਮਹਾਨ ॥ (੨੪) ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨਿ ॥ ਅਝਿਲ ॥ ਹਿਰਨਯ ਗਰਭ ਜੋ ਭਾਖਿਉ ਮੋਹਿ ਮਹਾਨਿਯੈ ॥  
ਸੁਖਮ ਦੇਹਿ ਬਖਾਨਿਉ ਮੋਹਿ ਸੁ ਜਾਨਿਯੈ ॥  
ਸੁਖਮ ਜਾਨ ਸੁ ਕਾਰਨ ਆਪ ਮਹਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਹੋ ! ਕਾਰਨ ਮਾਹੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਰਹਿਯੋ ਸੁਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥ (੨੬)

man and his purpose of being. The *Udasi Bodh* begins with *Manglacharan* or the poet's prayer invoking God or *Parmeshwar Brahm* for completion of his work<sup>67</sup>. The *Granth* starts with the *Mul-Mantra* of the *Japuji Sahib* and the *Manglacharan* begins with *Ram Binod Chhand* (metre). Then, the poet makes prayers to his Guru and we see no difference in the attributes of his Guru and the *Parmeshwar* or the Almighty One.

It informs us how this *Mul Mantra* passed from Vishnu to Brahma, then from Brahma to Narad Muni to Rishi *Vyas* to Raja Janak and so on to Rishi Vashishat, Rama and Shivji. Shivji passed it to Parvati. On the historical plane, Shri Ramanuj gave this *mantra* to Ramananda Swami, who gave it to Gorakh Nath. And after that the God '*Ses Sain Bhagwan*' blessed Guru Nanak with this *mantra* and from Guru Nanak this *mantra* continuously passed on to all his successors, the Sikh Gurus. Sri Chand got this *mantra* from Guru Nanak Dev. It further continued through Baba Gurditta and the early *Udāsīs* of the four *dhuans* such as Balu Hasna, Almast, Goinda and Phul to many others.

In the *Udasi Bodh*, Sant Rein has devoted one complete chapter to the history of origin and growth of the *Udāsī Panth*.<sup>68</sup> He traces spiritual descent of the *Udāsīs* from Sri Chand, who was spiritually enlightened and lived as a celibate throughout his life.<sup>69</sup> Writing in the first half of the Seventeenth century, even Bhai Gurdas had made a reference to the celibacy of Sri Chand, who, in his view, established the *dehra* (*smadh*) of his father, Guru Nanak, at Kartarpur, now in Pakistan.<sup>70</sup> However, Sant Rein seeks the divine sanctity of *Udāsī* tradition by tracing its meta-historical origin from the '*Onkar*' (God).<sup>71</sup> Not only this, at the same time, he tries to trace the legitimacy of the *Udāsī Panth* from Guru Nanak and his doctrine of *satnam* (the only true name of God). In his view, it was the same seed of *satnam* that sprouted from Gum Nanak and flourished, in the orthodox line of Sikh Gurus as well as *Udāsī* tradition that continued from Sri Chand to the four *Dhuans* (smouldering hearths)

<sup>67</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, . ff.1:

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 306-19:

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਬੋਧ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਪਰਕਰਣ ਬਰਨਨੰ ਨਾਮ ਬਤੀਸਮੇ ਧਿਆਇ ॥ 32''

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, f. 299<sup>b</sup>:

ਹੋ ! ਬਾਲ ਜਤੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਸੋ ਜਾਨ ਮਹਾਨਿਯੋ ॥

ਹੋ ਨਾਦੀ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਪੰਥ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਜਾਨਿਯੋ ॥

<sup>70</sup> Giani Hazara Singh (ed), *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, Amritsar, 1962, var 26, pauri 33:

ਬਾਲਜਤੀ ਹੋ ਸਿਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਬਾਬਾਣਾ ਦੇਹਰਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ ॥

<sup>71</sup> Sant Rein's, *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript 1858, f. 2<sup>a</sup>:

ਓ ਅੰਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਭਏ ਉਦਾਸੀ ॥

ਸੋਹ ਤੇ ਜਾਨੋ ਸੰਨਾਸੀ ॥

through the intermediacy of Baba Gurditta.<sup>72</sup> What is notable is that, Sant Rein shows extra regards for Guru Nanak, thus, claiming that he belonged to the lineage of *Suryavans*.<sup>73</sup> Even, Mehta Kalu, Guru Nanak's father, is mentioned as an incarnation of Kashyap.<sup>74</sup> This shows ambivalence of Sant Rein, who simultaneously traces both historical and meta-historical origins of the *Udāsī Panth*. He uses the metaphor of a tree for the *Udāsī Panth* to explain its expansion.<sup>75</sup> The *panth*, in his view, had the divine sanction.<sup>76</sup>

Significantly, Sant Rein refers to Sri Chand and Guru Angad as the two branches of the same tree (Guru Nanak).<sup>77</sup> Not only this, he explains the growth of *Udāsī* tradition through Baba Gurditta, eldest son of Guru Hargobind, for whom the *Udāsīs* had a special reverence. He is of the view that *Sankadik* (the four sons of Brahma) appeared before Baba Gurditta at Kiratpur.<sup>78</sup> The latter adopted them as his disciples and renamed them.<sup>79</sup> They were Almast, Balu Hasna, Goinda and Phul.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, f. 313<sup>b</sup>:

ਸੰਤਿਨਾਮ ਤਾਹਿ ਬੀਜ ਸੁ ਜਾਨੈ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਹਿ ਮੂਲ ਪਛਾਨੈ ॥ ੫੦ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਅੰਗਦੋ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਪੁੱਤਰ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਭਏ ਸੁ ਦੋਇ ॥  
ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਬਾਬਾ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤਾ ॥  
ਡਾਲੇ ਭਏ ਸੁ ਦੋਇ ਪਵਿੱਤਾ ॥  
ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਗੁਰ ਧੁੰਨੀ ਚਾਰ ॥  
ਉਪ ਡਾਲੇ ਤਹ ਲੋਹ ਬਿਚਾਰ ॥

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, f. 299<sup>b</sup>:

ਸੂਰਜ ਬੀਸੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਹੋ ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਕਹਿਯੋ ਸੂਰਜ ਬੀਸ ਮਹਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, f. 299<sup>b</sup>:

ਸਿਉਰਾਮ ਕਾ ਕਾਲੂ ਸੁਤ ਪਹਚਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਹੋ ਕਾਲੂ ਕੱਸੀਪ ਕਾ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਮਹਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, f. 313<sup>a</sup>:

ਪੰਥ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਹੈ ਯੈ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਬਿਰਛਿ ਰੂਪ ਕਰਿ ਬਰਨੈ ਸੋਇ ॥

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, f. 314<sup>a</sup>:

ਨਿਰਗੁਨਿ ਸਰਗੁਨਿ ਏਕ ਹੈ। ਹੇਮ ਅਭਰਨਿ ਜਿਉ ਨਾਮ ॥  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਿਰਛਿ ਇਹੁ ਪੰਥ ਹੈ। ਮੇਰੀ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਮ ॥

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, f. 314<sup>a</sup>:

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਮੂਲ ਹੈ ॥  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਅੰਗਦ ਡਾਲ ॥

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 307b and 308<sup>a</sup>:

ਬਾਬਾ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ॥  
ਕੀਰਤਿਪੁਰ ਮੋ ਬੇ ਸੋ ਭਾਈ ॥ ੬ ॥  
ਸਨਕਾਦਿਕ ਚਾਰੋ ਤਹ ਆਏ ॥  
ਮਹਾਂ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਪਠਾਇ ॥

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, f. 309<sup>b</sup>:

ਚੋਪਈ॥ਬਾਬੇ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤੈ ਸੋ ਚਾਰੋ ॥  
ਚੋਲੇ ਕਰੇ ਸੁ ਆਪ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥  
ਤਿਨਕੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਉਰ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਖੇ ॥  
ਪੂਰਨ ਕਰੀ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਅਭਿਲਾਖੇ ॥ ੨੨ ॥

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, f. 309<sup>b</sup>:

ਪਹਲਾ ਬਾਲੂ ਹਸਨਾ ਜਾਨ ॥

They were heads of the four *dhuans*, known as *adi-Udāsīs* who practised *nam simran*.<sup>81</sup>

It may be noted that in Sant Rein's view, the *Udāsī panth* further expanded primarily due to their efforts and it grew the same way as the *marg* of the *Vedas* and that of the *Guru Granth Sahib*<sup>82</sup>. Significantly, the term used for the *adi-Udāsīs* and their followers is '*Nanakban*', adherents of *Guru Nanak*, although they observed distinct bodily symbols and practices and did not believe in casteism.<sup>83</sup>

Sant Rein's attempt to claim the equal veracity of his *Udāsī Panth* with that of the *Panth* of *Guru Nanak* is quite clear from the *Udasi Bodh*. He makes a reference to the *Matra* (incantation) of *Sri Chand* which in his eyes was not less in any way than the spiritual merit of the *Japuji* of *Guru Nanak*.<sup>84</sup> Even the other compositions of Sikh liturgy such as the *Kirtan Sohila*, the *Japuji* and the *Rehras* had the same religious merit as is contained in the *Arta* and the *Matra* of the *Udāsīs*.<sup>85</sup>

Sant Rein's presentation of the *Udāsī Panth* in the *Udasi Bodh*, makes clear that he had emphatically sought its legitimacy with the early Sikh tradition by all means. At the same time, he was very much conscious of the fact that *Udāsī* tradition was growing almost on parallel lines to the *Panth* of the Sikh Gurus. By doing all this, he was perhaps not only seeking patronage from his contemporary Sikh classes and

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ਦੂਜਾ ਪੁਨਿ ਮਸਤ ਮਹਾਨ ॥  
ਤੀਜਾ ਗੋਇੰਦ ਜਾਨ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥  
ਚੌਥਾ ਫੂਲ ਸੁ ਚਾਰ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥ ੨੩ ॥

<sup>81</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, f. 309<sup>b</sup>:  
ਚਹੁੰ ਤੇ ਚਾਰੋਂ ਧੁੰਨੀ ਚਾਲੀ ॥  
ਨੀਵ ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਹਾਲੀ ॥  
ਇਹ ਚਾਰੋਂ ਹੈ ਆਦਿ ਉਦਾਸੀ ॥  
ਸਿਮਰੈ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ॥

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 309<sup>b</sup>:  
ਇਨ ਤੇ ਬਢਿਉ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਪੰਥ ॥  
ਮਾਰਗ ਬੇਦ ਔਰ ਗੁਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ॥

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 309<sup>b</sup> and 310<sup>a</sup>:  
ਸਵੈਯਾ ॥ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਅੰਗ ਬਿਭੂਤਿ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਸਨਕਾਦਿਕ ਸੀਸ ਜਟਾਂ ਬਿਬਰਾਨਾ ॥  
ਪਾਇ ਖੜਾਂਉ ਦਿਗੰਬਰ ਭੇਖ ਜਪੈ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੁ ਬਖਾਨਾ ॥  
ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮ ਲਖੈ ਸਭ ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਏਕ ਸਮਾਨਾ ॥  
ਫੂਲ ਸੁ ਮਾਲ ਸੁ ਹੈ ਗਲ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਏ ਸਭ ਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਨਾ ॥ ੨੭ ॥

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 310<sup>b</sup>:  
ਚੋਪਈ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਖੇਲੁ ਰਚਾਯਾ ॥  
ਅਗਮ ਨਿਗਮ ਕਾ ਪੰਥ ਬਤਾਯਾ ॥  
ਏਹੁ ਮਾਤਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਿਖਾਈ ॥  
ਸਿਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਭਾਈ ॥ ੩੩ ॥  
... ..

ਜਪ ਸਮ ਮਾਤਰ ਹੈ ਯੇ ਸੋਇ ॥  
ਯਾਹਿ ਵਿਖੈ ਸੰਸਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥ ੩੪

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 310<sup>b</sup> and 311<sup>a</sup>:  
ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ ਆਰਤਾ ਜਪੁ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਰਹਰਾਸ ॥  
ਇਨ ਪਾਂਚੋ ਕੋ ਜੋ ਪੜੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤਿਨੁ ਕੇ ਪਾਸ ॥ ੩੫ ॥

landed aristocracy, but also was definitely widening his social base among the people of different strata of society during the late 18th and early 19th centuries.<sup>86</sup>

The evidence of the *Udasi Bodh* is also very helpful to know the views of the *Udāsīs* on the nature of God and several other religious and philosophical issues and concepts such as *maya*, *bhakti*, *mukti*, *vairag*., *atman*, *jnan* or *gyan*, *karam* or the theory of transmigration of the soul, *pap*, *pun*, *dukh* and the five evils i.e. *kam*, *krodh*, *lobh*., *moh* and *ahankar*.

The *Udasi Bodh* clearly reveals that the *Udāsīs* believed in the concept of *Advait Brahm* (non-dualism). To reinforce their belief of *Advait Brahm* they seek support in the *Vedas*.<sup>87</sup> They used both Hindu and Sikh epithets for God such as *Brahm*, *Satnam*, *Govind*, *Gopal*, *Ram*, *Krishan*, *Vishan* (*Vishnu*), *Vahiguru*, *Vasudev*, *Shiv*, *Mahadev* and *Narain*.<sup>88</sup>

As a source for comprehending the socio-cultural history of early nineteenth century Punjab, the evidence of the *Udasi Bodh* is very valuable. It contains numerous references to the contemporary social evils and practices. The habits of drinking and meat eating; theft of religious scriptures as well as corn, cotton and fruits; the practices of female infanticide and illicit sexual relations; and the killing of animals frequently find mention in the text. Sant Rein, expresses his concern towards the contemporary social evils and practices and it should, therefore, be taken as the *Udāsīs* 's response to the changing political scene in Punjab as well as the case of their changing attitudes. Hence, the historical value of the *Udasi Bodh* as a source on the social history of the Punjab needs special attention. He has made very explicit

<sup>86</sup> Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy In The Sikh Tradition*, pp 47-64.

<sup>87</sup> Sant Rein's, *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript 1858, ff. 222<sup>b</sup> and 223<sup>a</sup>:

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਏਕੁ ਅਦ੍ਵੈਤਿ ਬੇਦ ਨਿਤੁ ਭਾਖਈ ॥

... ..

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਿਖੇ ਦ੍ਵੈਤ ਨਾਹਿ ਐਸੇ ਬੇਦ ਭਾਖੇ ਤਾਂਹਿ ॥

ਕਹੇ ਸੰਤ ਰੈਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅਦ੍ਵੈਤਿ ਜਾਨਿਐ ॥

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, f. 234<sup>b</sup>. See also *ibid* f. 244<sup>a</sup>:

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੇ ਅਨੇਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਹੈ ਕੁਛੁ ਸੁਖ ਧਾਮ ॥

ਜਾਪਕ ਕੇ ਮੋਖ ਧਾਮ ਦੇਹਿ ਸੋ ਮਹਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਾਮ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਨਾਮੁ ॥

ਰਾਮ ਐਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਸ਼ਨ ਉਰ ਆਨ ਰੇ ॥

ਵਾਹਗੁਰੂ ਵਾਸਦੇਵ ਸਦਾ ਸਿਵ ਮਹਾਦੇਵ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਮਾਰਾਯਣ ਪੇ ਦਤ ਨਾਮ ਜਾਨ ਰੇ ॥

... ..

ਏਕ ਕਹੈ ਜੀਵ ਏਕ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਬਖਾਨ ਕਹੈ ॥

ਏਕ ਕਹੈ ਮਾਯਾ ਏਕ ਜਗਤ ਬਖਾਨ ਹੈ ॥

ਅਪਨੀ ਅਪਨੀ ਬੁਧਿ ਅਨੁਮਾਨ ਸਭ ਕਹੈ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਾ ਜਥਾ ਰਥ ਨ ਤਾਹਿ ਪਰ ਗਯਾਨ ਹੈ ॥

references to the moral and ethical degradation of the age. In this context, the practices of female infanticide,<sup>89</sup> the selling of woman<sup>90</sup> and the existence of illicit sexual relations find special mention. The age in which Sant Rein lived and experienced is termed as *Riti* by scholars of Hindi language and literature. His works reveal not only his literary merit and art of writing rather his wider experiences and understanding of the contemporary socio-religious and political realities.

Sant Rein in *Udasi Bodh* deplores the prevalence of a number of social evils prevalent during the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>91</sup> His deep observation regarding the social status of women in the society help us to construct the true picture of women of that time. He mentions in detail the existence of female infanticide, where the birth of the girl child was considered a burden on the family and as such was inauspicious. The practice of infanticide had so much aggravated that most of the literary *Udāsī* works of that time condemn this practice.<sup>92</sup> The reason for the development of such practice can be attributed to fear of Muslim attack and the growth of dowry system which had taken a deep root in the society. This further led to the development of another evil practice of *Sati* system.

Another social evil which was related to the women was the selling of women<sup>93</sup> in the market as commodity. This evil was the outcome of the continuous war taking place from time to time between Mughals, Sikhs, Afghans etc. The practice of selling a girl also existed among the poor members of the society as they could not afford to upkeep and marry her. The women were taken as war booty and were openly sold in the market. This practice had become quite common to be noticed by Sant Rein and others. He laments and condemns the practice and writes that those who earn money by selling women either in war or to fulfill the economic needs of

<sup>89</sup> Sant Rein's, *Udasi Bodh*, Manuscript 1858, f. 70<sup>a</sup>:

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, f. 73<sup>ab</sup>:

<sup>91</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "Society in the Eyes of an Ascetic of Early Nineteenth Century", *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, XXXVIII Session, March 2004, pp. 268-272.

<sup>92</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f 70<sup>a</sup>:

ਬਾਲ ਹੱਤਿਆ, ਕੰਨਯਾ ਘਾਤ ॥  
ਅਬਲਾ ਹੁਮੇ ਹੀਨ ਪੁਨਿ ਜਾਤ ॥  
ਹੀਨ ਜਾਤ ਅਬਲਾ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਉਚੀ ਜਾਤ ਕੋ ਭੋਗੇ ਜੋਇ ॥  
ਉਚ ਬਰਣ ਕਾ ਧਰਮ ਡੁਬਾਏ ॥  
ਸੋ ਅਬਲਾ ਜਪੁਪੁਰਿ ਜੋ ਜਾਵੈ ॥

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, ff 73<sup>ab</sup>:

ਕੰਨਿਆ ਕਾ ਪੈਸਾ ਜੋ ਲਏ ॥  
ਪੈਸਾ ਲੇਕਰਿ ਕੰਨਯਾ ਦਏ ॥  
ਭੋਗੇ ਨਰਕ ਸੋ ਪੁਰਖ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ ॥  
ਅਨਿਕ ਜਨਮ ਤੇ ਹੋਵੇ ਹਾਨੀ ॥

the family will be awarded hell after death. That is the main reason that the birth of girl child was deplored and she was killed. On the contrary, Sant Rein also imposes certain moral obligations on women which he wants them to observe in the society. He warns them not to indulge in sexual exploits and as such condemns adultery and illicit<sup>94</sup> relations. In *Udasi Bodh*, there are frequent references to the prevalence of illegal or illicit sexual relations.<sup>95</sup> He expects women to bear a good moral character so that she earns respectable status in the society. It was perhaps, a suggestion to improve the deplorable condition of the women. He wants her to be sincere to her husband to whom she is married for life. He wants women to lead a simple and blissful life. He asks them to shun the use of meat and intoxicant drinks and he bequeaths curse on such women to lead a miserable life.<sup>96</sup> Idealist Sant Rein wishes women to be respectful and sincere to their husband and his family. He laments those women who mistreat and disrespect the parents of her husband,<sup>97</sup> which spoils the family peace. On the whole, the *Udasi Bodh* carries a long list of preaching and teaching concerning the women. If he condemns the evil practices in the society then on the other hand he throws a lengthy piece of advice for her to improve her status and position in the family and society as a whole.

<sup>94</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f 76 a :

ਅਪਨਾ ਪਤਿ ਤਜਿ ਹੋਇ ਉਦਾਰੇ ।।  
ਪਰ ਪੁਰਖਨਿ ਕੋ ਭੋਗੈ ਨਾਰੇ ।।  
ਬਿਭਚਾਰਨ ਸੋ ਅਬਲਾ ਹੋਇ ।।  
ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਦੇਹਿ ਦਿਖਾਵੈ ਸੋਇ ।।

<sup>95</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "Society in the Eyes of an Ascetic of Early Nineteenth Century", p.270.

<sup>96</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f 70<sup>a</sup> :

ਮਦਰਾ ਮਾਸ ਨਾਰ ਜੋ ਖਾਇ ।।  
ਘਰ ਜਨਮ ਸੋ ਅਬਲਾ ਪਾਇ ।।  
ਧਰਮ ਰਾਇ ਤਿਸ ਦਏ ਸਜਾਇ ।।  
ਲੋ ਕਰ ਮੇਲ ਮਾਸ ਜੋ ਖਾਇ ।।  
ff 67<sup>a, b</sup>:  
ਦੂਜੇ ਜਨਮ ਸੋ ਵਿਧਵਾ ਹੋਇ ।।  
ਯਾਹਿ ਵਿਖੇ ਸੰਸਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ ।।  
ਬਾਲ ਸੁ ਬਿਧਵਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਰੀ ।।  
ਪਤਿ ਬਿਨ ਭੋਗੇ ਦੁਖ ਅਪਾਰੀ ।।

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, f 78<sup>a</sup>:

ਨਿਜ ਪਤੀ ਕੋ ਜੋ ਨਾਹ ਸੁਨਾਇ ।  
ਸਾਸ ਸਸੁਰ ਕੋ ਬੁਰਾ ਅਲਾਇ ।  
ਬਿਸਟਾ ਮਾਹੀ ਕਿਰਮੁ ਸੁ ਹੋਇ ।  
ਬਿਸਟਾ ਨਾਰੀ ਖਾਵੈ ਸੋਇ ।।

... ..  
ਪਤੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਨੇ ਨ ਨਾਰੀ ।  
ਜਾਏ ਅਧਿਗਤ ਸੋਇ ਬਿਚਾਰੀ ।।

*Ibid* 73<sup>a</sup>

ਘਰ ਮੈਂ ਤਜਿ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਨਾਰੇ ।  
ਪਰ ਦੁਆਰ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ਉਦਾਰੇ ।।  
ਦੁਖ ਬਯਾਦੀ ਜਨਮਤਿ ਤਹਿ ਲਾਗੇ ।  
ਜੋ ਨਰ ਆਪਣੀ ਨਰ ਤਯਾਗੇ ।।

The main important aspect about women which Sant Rein has dealt in length is the plight of the widows. He depicts the poor plight of the widow in the society. The widows were debarred from using cosmetics<sup>98</sup> to beautify her. As she could not remarry the only way left for her was to surrender herself to God.<sup>99</sup> This further proves the point that *Sati* was not common in Punjab, but it brings to another social evil prevalent in the society that widow remarriage was not allowed. This was the major curse to the womanhood who became widow at the early age. As such their life was made miserable by the social norms and she was deprived of all the luxuries of clothes and ornaments and even of spicy food. She had to lead a life of an ascetic.<sup>100</sup> The position of the widow in the society has still not undergone much change. She is considered a bad omen and is made responsible for the death of her husband. One thing which brings to our notice is that all the *Udāsī* poets have talked about widow's plight. It proves that in Punjab the practice of *sati* was not in vogue among the common people. Sant Rein being an ascetic also acted as a great moralist by showing mirror to the society where a woman was ill-treated. The sole purpose behind this was an appeal for the upliftment of the moral standard of the society. He also curses the masterminds behind these atrocities inflicted upon women.<sup>101</sup> The purpose of bestowing curse on such men was to create fear in their mind and to resist them from mistreating women. It has been mostly seen that men are more afraid of religious punishments and curse than the course of law. On the whole Sant Rein observed that generally a woman was illtreated. In his eyes a person subjecting a woman to atrocities of any kind was to remain cursedly a widower for not less than three of his

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<sup>98</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f 113<sup>b</sup>:

ਨ ਸੁਗੰਧ ਲਗਾਇ ਨ ਦੇਹਿ ਬਨਾਇ ਨ ਫੁਲਨ ਹਾਰ ਸੁ ਪਾਇ ਗਲਾਨੈ ।।

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, f 112<sup>b</sup>:

ਪਤੀ ਬਾਝ ਜੋ ਹੈ ਅਥਲਾ ਜਗ ਮੋ ।  
ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਰਹਿਣੀ ਅਬ ਤੋਹਿ ਬਖਾਨੈ ।।  
ਅਪਨਾ ਤਨ ਜੋ ਹਰ ਕੋ ਅਰਪੈ ।  
ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਸੁਣ ਨਾ ਜਪੈ ਭਗਵਾਨੈ ।।

<sup>100</sup> Balwinderjit, *A Critical Editing of Sant Rein's Udasi Bodh*, p. 40.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, f. 70<sup>b</sup>, and 73<sup>a</sup>:

ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਕੀ ਹੱਤਿਆ ਕਰੈ ਪਰਾਨੀ ।।  
ਜਾਇ ਅਧੋਗਤਿ ਸੋਇ ਬਨਾਨੀ ।।

*Ibid*, f 73<sup>a</sup>:

ਨਾਰੀ ਕੋ ਦੁੱਖ ਦਏ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀ ।  
ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਬਾਝ ਸੁ ਰਹੈ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ ।  
ਰੰਡਾ ਰਹੈ ਸੁ ਪੁਰਖ ਉਦਾਰੇ ।  
ਤੀਨ ਜਨਮੁ ਤਹਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਨ ਨਾਰੇ ।।



rebirths.<sup>102</sup> How far his curse had been helpful to improve the condition of the women cannot be confirmed but his genuine intentions cannot be detested.

Among the other equally contemptible acts in the society of his times was the killing of animals and eating and selling of meat.<sup>103</sup> He not only condemned those who took to meat eating but also asked the meat sellers to change the occupation. He writes that he does not want to have any kind of social contact and religious discourse<sup>104</sup> with such people who indulge in meat eating or selling. He was against the slaughter of animals. He curses that such people one day will be punished by the Dharam Raj on the last Day of Judgment.<sup>105</sup>

The elaborate institution known as caste system among the Hindus in India may almost be said to be without a parallel in the world, although there is hardly a country where classes or order of society or grades of social distinction of some kind or other are not met with.<sup>106</sup> Megasthenes when came to India in 305 B.C., also mentions the existence of seven castes on the basis of occupation. Alberuni, who visited India in seventh century, too mentioned existence of caste system.<sup>107</sup>

Thus, caste system had been prevalent since ancient times and its roots were deep rooted in Indian social system. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs tried to do away with the system by proposing the usage of Singh and Kaur, for men and women respectively and ignoring caste. Caste System still continues and the curse of the system was felt and condemned in the *Udāsī* literature by the poets of the times. Sant Rein does not believe in caste distinction and hates those who practise the same and discriminate people on the basis of birth.<sup>108</sup> The major draw back of the caste system was that it ignored the quality in man and promoted those who belonged to the higher class and caste.

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<sup>102</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "Society in the Eyes of an Ascetic of Early Nineteenth Century", p.269.

<sup>103</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 70<sup>a</sup>:

ਜੀਵਨ ਮਾਰਿ ਜੋ ਪਰਾਨੀ ।  
ਬਦਲਾ ਲਏ ਸੋ ਫੇਰਿ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ ॥

<sup>104</sup> *Loc. Cit* :

ਬਿਸੈ ਲੰਪਟੀ ਮਾਸ ਜੋ ਖਾਈ ॥  
ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਨਾਹਿ ਸੁਣਾਣਾ ਭਾਈ ॥

<sup>105</sup> *Loc. Cit* :

ਧਰਮ ਰਾਇ ਤਿਸ ਦਏ ਸਜਾਇ ।  
ਲੇਕਰ ਮੇਲ ਮਾਸ ਜੁ ਖਾਇ ॥

<sup>106</sup> R.C Majumdar, (ed.), *The Vedic Age*, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Mumbai, 1996, p. 387.

<sup>107</sup> Edward C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, Rupa Publication, New Dehli, 2002, p. 85.

<sup>108</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, f. 201<sup>a</sup>:

ਵਰਣਾਸਰਮ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਅਭਿਮਾਨ ।  
ਲੋਹੇ ਕੀ ਬੇੜੀ ਜੋ ਜਾਨ ।

It is quite paradoxical that Sant Rein on one hand condemns caste system and holds all equal before God but on the contrary, he talks of bestowing respect and honour for the Brahmins<sup>109</sup>. Perhaps, the poet was favouring the Brahmins for their religious obligations which should not be calculated on caste basis. He wants the society to pay charity<sup>110</sup> and respect to the Brahmins as they preach and recite the religious scriptures.<sup>111</sup> They believed that Guru Nanak also favoured the idea of charity as a way to salvation.<sup>112</sup> They themselves practiced begging, and therefore, favoured the cause of beggars.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, the Brahmins also acted as teachers for

<sup>109</sup> Sant Rein, *Udasi Bodh*, f.68<sup>a</sup>:

ਭਗਵਤ ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ ਇਸਨਾਨ ।।  
ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਬਿੰਪਰ ਮਾਨ ।।  
ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜਿਉ ਰਖੇ ਮਾਨੇ ।।  
ਤਿਉ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਾ ਜਾਨ ਮਹਾਨੇ ।।

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 81<sup>ab</sup> and 82<sup>a</sup>:

ਅਸਿ ਰਸਤੇ ਤਿਨ ਜਮ ਲੈ ਜਾਵਹਿ ।  
ਕਰਿਯੋ ਪੁਨੰਯ ਤਹਾ ਸੋ ਪਾਵਹਿ ।  
... ..  
ਪੁਨੰਯ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਪਾਪ ਸੋ ਭਾਗੇ ।  
... ..  
ਅਧਿਕ ਪੁਨੰਯ ਸਰਲੋਕ ਲਜਾਵਹਿ ।  
ਅਧਿਕ ਪਾਪ ਤਿਨ ਨਰਕ ਸੁ ਪਾਵਹਿ ।

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 82<sup>ab</sup>, 84<sup>a</sup> and 85<sup>a</sup>:

ਚੋਪਈ। ਬੇਦ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਬੇਦ ਅਚਾਰ ।  
ਰਹਿਣੀ ਕਹਿਣੀ ਬੇਦ ਆਧਾਰ ।  
ਉਤਮ ਮਾਰਗ ਮੈ ਬਿਰਖੁੰਧਿ ।  
ਨਾਇ ਧੋਇ ਤਨ ਰਾਖੇ ਸੁਧਿ । 2 ।  
ਕੁਲਾ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਲਿ ਦੇਸ ਅਚਾਰ ।  
ਬਿਰਧ ਅਚਾਰੰ ਧਰਮ ਅਚਾਰ ।  
ਕਹੇ ਪਚੀਸ ਅਚਾਰੰ ਪਾਛੇ ।  
ਬਰਤੇ ਤਿਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੋ ਆਛ । 3 ।  
ਐਸਾ ਬਾਹਮਣ ਹਯੋ ਜੋਉ  
ਸਤ ਪਾਤਰ ਤੁਮ ਜਾਨੋ ਸੋਉ ।  
... ..  
ਭਗਵਤਿ ਭਗਤੀ, ਗਯਾਨ, ਬਿਰਾਗ,  
ਰਾਮ ਦੇਵਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਬਡਿਭਾਗੇ।  
ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ, ਖਿਮਾ, ਦਯਾ, ਭੰਡਾਰੇ, ਮਾਨ, ਪਮਾਨ,  
ਕਾਮ ਲਹਿਰ ਤੇ ਸਚੇ ਜੁ ਚਾਤਿਰ ।  
ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਹਯੋ ਸਤਿ ਪਾਤਰ ।  
ਮਹਾ ਪੁਨੰਯ ਤਹਿ ਹੋਇ ਬਿਨਾਨੀ । 13 ।

ਸੰਧਯਾ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਗਯਾਤ੍ਰੀ ਪਾਠ ।  
ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਨ ਉਪਜੈ ਉਰ ਜਹਿ ਚਾਤਰਿ ।  
ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਹਯੋ ਸਤਿ ਪਾਤਰ । 22 ।

<sup>112</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 176<sup>b</sup>:

ਭਵ ਤਰਨੇ ਕਾ ਏਹ ਉਪਾਵੇ ਜਾਨਿਯੋ ।  
ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਭਾਖਿਉ ਆਪ ਮਹਾਨੀਯੋ !  
ਦੀਨ ਗਰੀਬਨ ਕੋ ਹੱਥ ਤੇ ਕਛ ਦੀਜੀਯੋ ।  
ਹੋ ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਇਹ ਜਨਮ ਸਫਲ ਕਰ ਲੀਜੀਯੋ । 92 ।

<sup>113</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 72<sup>b</sup>:

ਅਭਿਆਹਤ ਆਵੇ ਜੋ ਦਵਾਰੇ ।  
ਤਿਸਕੋ ਕੁਛ ਨ ਦਏ ਉਚਾਰੇ ।  
ਤਾਹਿ ਦਏ ਬਿਨ ਅੰਨਜੁ ਖਾਈ ।

the students. Similarly, he wants the society to pay equal status to the *Harijans* or the people of low caste.<sup>114</sup> He wanted to do away with prevailing system of untouchability. This was the major social evil prevalent in the society as a whole and it needed utmost condemnation. *Udāsī* poets did it at the right opportune moment and tried to preach the lesson of fraternity. He not only condemned caste system and caste indiscrimination but also those who were infested with caste pride. Sant Rein condemned stealing of religious scriptures, corn, cotton and fruit.<sup>115</sup> These references of Sant Rein present a clear cut picture of the prevalence of un-touchability and rigidity of society in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. He also condemns the usage of harsh words for religious persons,<sup>116</sup> killing of a Brahmin<sup>117</sup> and breaking idols of Shiva and Vishnu<sup>118</sup>

*Nanak Vijay Granth* is very voluminous in size, written in form and style of an Indian epic, though covers a very vast canvas of Guru Nanaks life, yet the manner in which it has been written is less historical and more fable. It contains 1860 pages, 20 *Khand*, 24382 *Chand*, 347 chapters. It has been published by the language Department of Panjab, in Hindi (Devanagri script) in three volumes.<sup>119</sup> From beginning to end no where any reference is given by Sant Rein about the period of its

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ਮਾਸ ਬਰਾਬਰਿ ਅੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਭਾਈ । 88 ।

<sup>114</sup> *Udasi Bodh*, f. 77<sup>ab</sup>:  
ਹਰਿਜਨ ਕੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ।।  
ਰੀਛ ਜਨਮੁ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਥਰੇ ।।

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, f. 77<sup>a</sup>:  
ਸਾਸਤਰਿ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਚੁਰਾਏ ।।  
ਦੂਜਾ ਜਨ ਪਿੰਗੁ ਕਾ ਪਾਵੇ ।।  
ਅਨ ਚੁਰਾਵੈ ਪਰ ਕਾ ਜੋਇ ।।  
ਕੀੜਾ ਹੋਇ ਅੰਨਿ ਕਾ ਸੋਇ ।।  
ਰੂ ਕਪਾਸ ਚੁਰਾਵੈ ਚੀਰਾ ।।  
ਸੇਤ (ਸਵੇਤ) ਕੁਸਟਿ ਤਹਿ ਹੋਇ ਸਰੀਰਾ ।  
ਰੇਸਮ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਚੁਰਾਵੈ ਜੋਇ ।।  
ਪਰ ਫਲ ਕੀ ਚੋਰੀ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ।  
ਜਨਮਤਿ ਤਿਨਕੇ ਬੇਟੇ ਮਰੇ ।

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, f. 69<sup>a</sup>:  
ਗੁਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਸਮ ਪਾਪ ਨਾ ਕੋਇ ।।  
ਮੋਹਾਂ ਪਾਤਕੀ ਜਾਨੇ ਸੋਇ ।।  
... ..  
ਬੇਦ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਕੀ ਕਰਹਿ ਜੂ ਨਿੰਦਾ ।।  
ਤਿਨਕਾ ਗਯਾਨ ਨਾ ਆਇ ਪਸਿੰਦਾ ।।

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, f. 71<sup>a</sup>:  
ਬਾਰਾਂ ਗਊਆਂ ਮਾਰੈ ਜੋਇ ।।  
ਇੱਕ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਕੀ ਹੱਤਿਆ ਹੋਇ ।।

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, f. 716<sup>b</sup>:  
ਬਾਰਾ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਮਾਰੈ ਜੋਇ ।।  
ਇੱਕ ਬਾਲਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਪ ਸੁ ਹੋਇ ।।

<sup>119</sup> Sant Rein, *Guru Nanak Vijay*, Language Department, Panjab, Patiala, 1978, Vols, 1-3:  
ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਜੈ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਅਬ, ਬਰਨੀ ਭਲ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਜਿਨ ਕੋ ਪੜਿ ਸੁਨ ਸਮਨ ਕਰ, ਹੁਚਿ ਕਾ ਹੋਇ ਉਧਾਰ  
ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਜੈ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਾ ਬਾਰ ਪਾਰ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ ਸੰਤ ਰੇਣ ਵਹੀ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਯੋ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਕਹੈ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ ।

writing but it appears to have been written after Man Parbodh,<sup>120</sup> probably between 1892 to 1912 Shamsheer Singh Ashok considers 1848-1858 to be the composing period of *Nanak Vijay Granth*.<sup>121</sup> *Nanak Vijay Granth*, written towards the end of Sikh rule, shows the *Udāsī* 's view of Guru Nanak. The poet praises the greatness of Guru Nanak, who very humbly passed *gaddi* to Guru Angad Dev. Sant Rein considers Guru Nanak as *Param Guru* and is thankful to him because he made *Udāsī Panth* superior to all other existing *panths*. Whether Hindu or Musalman, all appreciate the greatness of Guru Nanak who spread the message of truth and even the *Udāsī Sants* consider him as *Isht*.

*Guru Nanak Vijay* is available at three places i.e. Balapurpeeth District Akola, Madhya Pradesh; second at Sadhu Bela Ashram Sakhar, Sindh; and the third (in 1981) could be seen with Mahant Chand Swroop of village Lehalkalan, District Sangrur. The original copy of *Guru Nanak Vijay*, is maintained at Sadhu Sant Rein Ashram, Bhudan Malerkotla. The other three are its copies only. It contains 1860 pages and size 30×18 square centimeter. Each page contains 24 lines and each line 19 to 20 words. It has 20 Khand, 347 chapters and 24,382 Chhand.<sup>122</sup>

Sant Rein's *Man Prabodh* is a small book of 166 chhands all addressed to *Man* (mind). The main stress is to divert attention of mind from worldly pursuits to Brahm and this is the first work of Sant Rein and probably written in *samvat* 1891-92

<sup>120</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 85.

<sup>121</sup> Shamsheer Singh Ashok, "Pepsu Ka Prachin Hindi Sahitya", Patiala 1956, pp. 72-86, as cited in Davinder Singh Vidyarthi (ed.), *Sri Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, Guru Nanak Studies Department, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar 1978; Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, p. 69; Sant Rein, *Nanak Vijay*, Sikh Reference Library, MS 8544, Amritsar, p. 1:

ਅਨੂਪ ਨਰਾਜ਼:

ਅੰਗਦ ਕੇ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਪਦਵੀ ਜਿਨ ਆਪ ਦਈ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਉਦਾਰੀ ।  
ਮਾਨ ਹਰਯੋ ਸਭ ਸਿਧਨ ਕਾ ਜਿਨ ਰਾਇ-ਬੁਲਾਰਹਿ ਪੈਸ ਸਵਾਰੀ ।  
ਨਾਮ ਜਪਾਇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰ ਕਾ ਭਵ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਸੰਗਤ ਪਾਰ ਉਤਾਰੀ ।  
ਤਾਹਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਕਰ ਜੋਰ ਸੁ ਵਾਰ ਹਿ ਵਾਰ ਹਮਾਰੀ ॥ ੨੧ ॥

Nanak Vijay, p. 14 :

ਕੁੰਡਲੀਆਂ

ਪਰਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਭਯੋ ਪੂਰਨ ਹਰਿ ਅਵਤਾਰਿ  
ਪੰਥ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਤਿਨ ਕੀਓ ਸਭ ਪੰਥਨ ਸਿਰਦਾਰਿ ।  
ਸਭ ਪੰਥਨ ਸਿਰਦਾਰਿ ਆਨ ਜਾਕੀ ਜਗ ਮਾਨੈ ।  
ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਦੇਖ ਅਜਮਾਤਿ ਹੋਰਾਨੈ ।  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਸਤਿ ਉਪਦੇਸ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਵੈ ।  
ਕਰੈ ਸੁ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੂਰਿ ਸਿੱਖਯ ਅਮਰਾਪਦ ਪਾਵੈ ।  
ਸਭਿ ਸੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸੰਤ ਗੁਰ ਇਸਟ ਹਕਾਰੇ ।  
ਸੰਤ-ਰੋਣ ਤਿਨ ਬਾਲਕ ਜਾਣ ਸੁ ਭੂਪ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥ ੯੯ / ੮ ॥  
ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਨਾਤਨ ਪੂਰਨ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜੋਇ ।  
ਸਨਿ ਸਨਕਾਦਕ ਜਿਸ ਭਯੋ ਸਿਵ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਪੁਨਿ ਦੋਇ ॥ ੧੦ / ੯ ॥  
ਤਿਸਕੀ ਹਮੈ ਉਪਾਸਨਾ ਮਾਰਗ ਬੇਦ ਸੁਜਾਨ  
ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਚਾਰਜ ਪਰਿ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਗਵਾਨ ॥ ੯੯ / ੧੦ ॥

<sup>122</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 84, 85.

i.e 1834-1835 AD.<sup>123</sup> It has been published and has fifty six pages. Harbhjan Singh, a well known scholar of Punjabi and Hindi literature, clearly upholds this fact while making comments on the language of Sant Rein's another work i.e. '*Man Parbodh*'. He has very well stated that Sant Rein used *Braj* with a mixture of *khari* language. He used only that type of *Braj* which was very likely to be well understood and used by the common people at that time. Not only that his language is simple and transparent, but also he has not tried at all to embellish his style with word jugglery or in sentence formation. This type of language not only most suited to his audience and common people, but also to his personality and poetic genius. The language of the *Udasi Bodh*, clearly reflects the influence of *Sanskrit* language and its vocabulary. The different meters of poetry (Indian Prosody called *Pingal*) are also found used at different places in the text. Even, as it has been said earlier, some *slokas* from the *Bhagwad Gita* and the *Adi Granth* too have been used in their original form in the manuscript of *Udasi Bodh*.<sup>124</sup>

Another important work of Sant Rein is *Amritsagar or Bachhan Sangreh*. The book of 144 pages has also been published. It was probably written in *samvat* 1914-15 i.e 1857- 1858 AD.<sup>125</sup> Its main subject matter being *Vedant*, the work is in question answer form where disciple asks the questions and Guru clarifies his doubts giving solution through examples. So, the work focuses on relation between Guru and disciple. It has 14 chapters, 144 pages and 723 chhands.<sup>126</sup>

During the period of Sant Rein, the society was facing political upheaval. His writings too express the chaotic conditions of those times. He condemned administration at many places, and also the society indulging in wrong deeds. He was against fast, Jagran and Hathyog. He was in favour of solemnizing marriage within the caste. He was influenced by magic, charm, and superstition of those times. For a successful journey he believed good omen was very important. He considered money and property as cause of suffering. He believed in poverty but does not consider poverty as the main cause of sorrow. The causes of suffering according to him are desires. His writings also express the influence of capitalism of the times. He considers *Lajja* as an ornament of India woman.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, pp. 68-69

<sup>124</sup> Harbhajan Singh, *Gurmukhi Lipi Mein Hindi Kavya: Sohlvin aur Satarvin Shatabdi*, p. 149

<sup>125</sup> Sachidanand Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye aur Kavi Sant Rein*, p. 69.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>127</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 87-89.

Before the development of *Khari*, most of the Hindi poets used ‘*Braj*’ *Bhasha*. The *Chandi Charit* of Guru Gobind Singh is the best example. Sant Rein had complete command over ‘*Braj*’ *Bhasha* along with *Khari Boli*. He also knew ‘*Sanskrit*’. Sparingly he has also used ‘Arabic and Persian’ words. Jaggannath Sharma considers that the language used by Sant Rein, is neither purely *Braj*, *Punjabi* or *Khari*. At one place, he considers *Sanskrit* as a difficult language for the people to understand and he used simple language to express his views. So Jaggannath Sharma considers Sant Rein’s language as *Khari* with a mixture of *Braj*, *Punjabi*, *Sanskrit* and a few words of Arabic and Persian language.<sup>128</sup>

The poets of this century included Kashi Ram, who belonged to Almast *Dhuan* and was initiated by his Guru Kan Das.<sup>129</sup> The only composition written in 1768 by him was *Kashi Ram Matra*.<sup>130</sup> Girdhar Das, was born in 1743 or 1713 is a controversial issue. But his period of writing appears to be 1770. Five known *Kundalian* of Girdhar Das are; *Kundalian*, Naval Kishore Press, Lucknow; *Kundalian*, Mustafa Press, Lahore; *Girdhar Kavi Rai*, Gulshane Punjab press, Rawalpindi; *Kundalian*, Bhargav Book Depot, Benaras; *Kundalian*, Khem Raj Krishan Das, Venkteshwar Press, Bombay. The three granths to his credit are *Pratyak Anubhav Shatak*, *Sapt Bhaye Nivaran Mantr* and *Nal Damyanti*. His composition *Nal Damyanti* which was a love story,<sup>131</sup> became the cause of criticism amongst the *Udāsīs*. The language used by him is simple, satirical and full of expression. Surat Ram was a

<sup>128</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 93.

<sup>129</sup> Kashi Ram Matra, Chopaiye 106, 107 as cited by Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 73.

<sup>130</sup> He mentions about birth of Guru Nanak, his discussion with Gorakh Nath and *Udasis* of Nanak to Makka Madina. According to him, Sri Chander was incarnation of *Shiva*. Narad was born as Mardana and Garur as Bala. He also gives description of Almast Muni and other saints. Kashi Ram’s work is helpful to understand the origin and spread of the *Udasis*. Jagannath Sharma, ‘*Udasin Samparda Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*’, 1981, pp. 73-77. Girdhar Das, was born in 1743 or 1713 is a controversial issue. But his period of writing appears to be 1770. Regarding his parentage, his name and date of birth, there are many controversies. It appears he was a Bhatt by Caste. *Bhai Kahan Singh* believes that his earlier name was Hari Das and he belonged to Punjab and Vishvdas *Udasi* was his Guru. Jagannath Sharma also believes that Girdhar Das was an *Udasi* Sant who came in contact with Maharaja Patiala and that he belonged to Punjab which was at that time a great centre of *Udasi* activities. Chanderkant Bali, *Punjabi Prantiya Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas*, p. 315 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p.188; Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye ka hindi Sahitya*, Piyush Parkashan, Delhi 1997, p. 132. Also see, *Bhai Kahan Singh*, *Shabdkosh*, 1221. Vishvdas *Udasi* was his Guru. Jagannath Sharma also believes that Girdhar Das was an *Udasi* Sant who came in contact with Maharaja Patiala and that he belonged to Punjab which was at that time a great centre of *Udasi* activities.

<sup>131</sup> Chander Kant Bali, , *Punjab Prantiya Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas* p.316 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Samparda Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 190; Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye ka hindi Sahitya*, p. 134.

poet,<sup>132</sup> who finds mention in the fifth volume of *Parchian Patshahi Dasvin Kian* in *Ustat Dasan Mahelan Ki*, written in 1776 A.D. Ishwar Das's Period of composition was 1790 A.D.<sup>133</sup> He is considered as a great poet of *Shingar Ras*. His work *Brij Vilas Satsai* is of great importance.<sup>134</sup> Rattan Hari<sup>135</sup> has written thirty two poetic compositions in Hindi, but his work has got no recognition in the Hindi literature. His monument can be seen at Amritsar and even today his line of succession still continues.<sup>136</sup> He left his family for religious pursuits at early age and came to Amritsar and was initiated into *Udāsīn* sect by Ramanuj, who was a great *Udāsī Sant* of the times.<sup>137</sup> His composition period can be considered 1860 A.D.<sup>138</sup> The compositions of Rattan Hari are: 1. *Ram Rahasya*, 2. *Prashanotri*, 3. *Ram Lalam Geet*, 4. *Saar Sangeet*, 5. *Dashrath Dohawali*, 6. *Yamak – Damak Dohawali*, 7. *Nanak – Yash - Chandrika*, 8. *Ekadish Bhagwat – Sakandh*, 9. *Koshlesh Kavitali*, 10. *Gurukriti Ratnavali*, 11. *Kusum Kyari*, 12. *Dasham Skandh Ke Kavitali*, 13. *Mahim Kavitali*, 14. *Nanak Nayak*, 15. *Raat Panchadhyayi*, 16. *Braj Yatra*, 17. *Kavit – Kadambini*, 18. *Raghutam Naamshastra*.<sup>139</sup> Anandghan was a known *Udāsī* poet towards the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. His compositions available in prose are *Japu Tika*, 1795 A.D., *Aarti Tika*, 1796 A.D., *Onkar Tika* 1797 A.D., *Sidh Gosht Tika* 1800 A.D., *Anand Tika*, *Asa Di var Tika* 1797 – 1800 A.D. From these *tikas*, expositions, it becomes clear that

<sup>132</sup> "Surat Ram Udasi", Davinder Singh Vidyarthi (ed.), *Sri Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, p. 59.

<sup>133</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 180.

<sup>134</sup> Two copies of this work are available. One copy carries the name of Ishwar Das and another work mentions the name of Amar Das as its author. But from the end of the book it appears that Ishwar Das is the real author. Though the work is in *Braj*, it also shows influence of Punjabi on it. The work shows reverence of the author towards Lord Krishna and attaches importance to the theory of *karma*, discipline and dutifulness.

<sup>135</sup> He was born at Lahore to Khatri Gulab Singh in 1791. "Rattan Hari *Udasin*", *Sri Guru Amar Das Abinandan* (ed.), Balwant Singh Dhillon, Guru Nanak Studies Department, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1985, 106; Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 181.

<sup>136</sup> Rajkumar Verma, *Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochnatmak Itihas*, p. 481, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 181.

<sup>137</sup> Chander Kant Bali, *Punjabi Prantiya Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas*, p. 333, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 181.

<sup>138</sup> "Rattan Hari *Udasin*", Balwant Singh Dhillon (ed.), *Sri Guru Amar Das Abinandan*, p. 106.

<sup>139</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 181, Jagannath Sharma gives Sialkot as his Birth place and that he was born to Gulab Singh Rajkumari. On the other hand Balwant Singh Dhillon's edited work *Shri Guru Amar Das Abhinandan* in "Rattan Hari *Udasin*", refers to his birth place at Lahore and his father as Gulab Singh Kapoor Khatri. See 'Rattan Hari *Udasin*', *Sri Guru Amar Das Abhinandan*, (ed) Balwant Singh Dhillon Guru Nanak Studies Department, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1985, p. 106.

Anandghan had searched for Indian philosophy, *Puranas* and other important literature and contributed a descriptive view to Punjabi literature.<sup>140</sup>

### III

The nineteenth and twentieth century works include the writings of **Bidhi Das, Kanwal Das, Ganga Das, Parmanand, Amir Das, Hirinam Das, Karshne poets, Shardha Ram, Bishan Das, Somuni, Krishan Das Swami Brahmanad, Gulab Das, Govind Ram** etc. Their work is mostly in *Hindi, Punjabi* and *Sanskrit*. The emphasis of some of the writers was mainly on British mal-administration, rotten judicial system and prevalent corruption. Besides this, some writers laid stress on social and moral values and encouraged their followers to follow the right path as shown by the *Udāsīs*. Some depicted the plight of the woman and some raised fingers on their loose character, and advised them to live a simple life. Their writings expose their insularity towards woman as they severely criticize them and consider them responsible for the social evils. Their writings portrayed the deteriorating social customs and rituals. The twentieth saw many women writers contributing through their compositions to the *Udāsī* literature such as, Laxmibai, Suvachna Dasi, Vijay Kaur and Shrimati Rattan Faujdar. The century also included writers like Brahmanand Udasin and Randhir Singh who had immensely contributed to the *Udāsī* history, its establishments and their fight against the Akalis.

Bidhi Das, a nineteenth century poet wrote *Bhagat Sudhasar*, which is available in Sikh Reference Library at Golden Temple. This *Granth* carries nine chapters which mention 171 *Bhagats* belonging to *Vaishnav Samprada*. In the end of this *Granth*, he mentions Guru Nanak Dev and has equated him with *Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh* and considers Guru Nanak as an *Avtar* of Raja Janak.<sup>141</sup> Kanwal Das Nirban

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<sup>140</sup> Later on, another commentary of the Japuji as *Japuji Steek* was written by Paramanand in Hindi in 1850's. Similarly, Amar Das *Udasi* also wrote a commentary of *Sukhmani* known as *Maniprabha*. He also wrote on Mahabharat, the Puranas and the Bhagwat Gita. Gobind Nath Raj Guru, "Udasi sampardaye di Puratan Punjabi Vartak Nu Den", *Khoj Patrika Puratan Vartak Vishesh Ank*, pp.363-364; "Anand Ghan Swami", Davinder Singh Vidyarthi (ed.), *Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, pp. 84-85.; Mohinder Kaur, *Baba Sri Chand te Udasi Mat*, p. 125, 126; The *Udasi* commentaries of the *Bani* of Sikh Gurus written towards the close of 18<sup>th</sup> century are available in Anand Ghan Udasi, *GurBani Tika* (ed. Rattan Singh Jaggi) Punjab Bhasha Vibhag, Patiala 1970. It includes the *Udasi*, versions of the *Japuji* of Guru Nanak, *Sidh Gosht*, *Anand* and *Asa di var*.

<sup>141</sup> Its composition period is said to be between 1817-1829 A.D. The reprint year on it is 1862 A.D. which means 33 years after its composition. Bidhi Das *Udasi*, "*Bhagat Sudhasar*", Sikh Reference library, MS Golden Temple, Amritsar, p. 42, as cited in *Sri Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, p.121, 122.



(Composition 1821) wrote *Guru Saakhi Brahm Bichar Mahatam Dhyam* (Manuscript 1821). He has praised Guru Nanak as the emancipator who has spread the idea of brotherhood, dedication, *Gyan* and *Bhagti* in this world.<sup>142</sup> Ganga Das wrote *Mahabharat padavali*.<sup>143</sup> He wrote about fifty books out of which only forty five are available. His writings include *Puran Bhagat*, *Narsi Bhagat Dhruv Bhagat*, *Nirgun Padhavali*, *Krishna Janam*, *Shravan Kumar*, *Nal Puran*, *Ram Katha*, *Nagleela*, *Sudama Charit*, *Mahabharat Padhavali*, *Bali ke Pad*, *Rudramani Mangal*, *Prahlad Bhagat*, *Chandr Vati Nasiket*, *Parvati Mangal*, *Bhramar Geet Manjari*, *Kundalian*, *Pad Harishchander*, *Nirgun Laavani* and *Barah Khari*. All these works are handwritten works of Ganga Das.<sup>144</sup>

His writings depict the picture of a conservative society where most of the daily routine works were bound by lucky, unlucky days, good and bad omen magic and charms, people whether rich or poor, all were in the tight grip of faith on Pandits and Ojhas.<sup>145</sup> There was a great demand for amulets as it was thought to keep the evil spell away.<sup>146</sup> A girl was married at three or four years of age and boy at six to eight years.<sup>147</sup> Ganga Das considered seven years girl to be fit for marriage.<sup>148</sup> According to Ganga Das, marriage during those days was a costly affair. He gives description of marriage ceremony which involved dowry system.<sup>149</sup> He writes that at the advent of

<sup>142</sup> *Gursakhi Brahm Bichar Mahatam Dhyam*, MS Personal Collection of the Author, 1821 as cited in Davinder Singh vidyarthi (ed.), *Sri Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, p. 140.

<sup>143</sup> Ganga Das (1823-1913) was born at Rasoolpur village near Babugarh cantonment on Delhi - Muradabad Road. His father Sukhram Munder, was a Jat by caste and a landlord. Mother named 'Dakha' belonged to Dyalpur near Balabgarh in Haryana. His earlier name was Ganga Baksh. From his childhood, he was of religious bent of mind who was affectionately called 'Bhagat Ji' by the villagers. At young age of 11 years, he lost his parents so he left his home and came in contact with Vishnu Das (*Udasin Sant*) who initiated Ganga Baksh into *Udasi* Sect, and renamed him as Ganga Das: Ganga Das, *Mahabharat Padhavali*, pad 160 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 103.

<sup>144</sup> The published works of Ganga Das are : Giri Raj Puja, Satyavadi Harishchand, Holi Puranmal, Tatav Gyan Prakash, Brahm Gyan Chintamani, Guru Chela Samvad, Siya Savambar, Brahm Gyan Chetavani, Gyan Mala, Ganga Vilas, Bhajan Mahabharat Udyog Prav (first part), Daropadi Cheer, Amarkatha, Anubhav Shab Ratnavali. Almost all his works are available at the head office of Akhil Bhartiya Ganga Das Hindi Sansthan 1/3364 Ramnagar, Delhi-32. Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>145</sup> Laxmi Sagar Vashne, *Adhunk Hindi Sahitya Ke Bhumika* p.123, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 110.

<sup>146</sup> Ganga Das, *Holi Puranmal* (part-II) p. 4, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 110.

<sup>147</sup> Laxmi Sagar Vaishnaye p.115, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 110.

<sup>148</sup> Narsi Bhagat, Pad 4, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 110.

<sup>149</sup> Nal Puran, pad 403 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 110.

the British, 'Kuru' Pradesh society was full of these evils and he compares this society with a stagnant and stinking pond.<sup>150</sup> For such a rotten society he holds British Administration responsible and condemns British administration as corrupt, and unethical. The Judiciary and judicial system had gone corrupt like the administrators who believed more in bribe than in work.<sup>151</sup> The criticism of Ganga Das about the social set up of the time stitches a complete picture of corrupt and inefficient administrative set up of that time. He also holds religious Sants responsible for the down trodden society. He has used *Braj Bhasha*, *Khari Boli*, few words of Arabic, Persian and Bhojpuri in his works.

Paramanand Udasin's composition *Japuji Sahib Sri Paramanandi Tika* (1872 A.D.) was published third time from Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow in Devnagri.<sup>152</sup> Amir Das<sup>153</sup> was a famous poet and his work finds mention in Bharatendu Harish Chandra's *Bhagat Mala*.<sup>154</sup> His other works are: *Krishansahitya Sindhu*, 1833, *Vaidh Kalpatru Pingal Vrit Chandrudaye*, *Brij Raj Vilas Satsai*, 1840, *Sher Singh Prakash*, 1840, *Amir Prakash*, 1859 and *Ashav Sahinta Prakash*, 1862.<sup>155</sup> His works show influence of Punjabi and Braj Bhasha. He has used both art and expression in his work. Advaitanand Brahma wrote *Narendra Nitishatak*, *Narendra Bhanu Prakash*, *Narendra Vibhavilas*, *Akaal Vilas* and *Guru Gobind Singh Digvijay*. The first three works are dedicated to Maharaja Narendra Singh of Patiala. He has praised Guru Gobind Singh in his last work. His writings belong to the period from 1851 to 1918.<sup>156</sup> Swami Harinam Das's work *Vinay Patrika* written in *Gurumukhi* is available in Haridwar library, with the name of author as 108, Swami Harinam Das Udasin. It was published by Ramesh Chander Suri of Kapurthala, from Mahesh Printing Press, Jalandhar. The publication date is not available.

<sup>150</sup> *Ganga Das Ki Kundalian*, p.225, Ganga Das, *Puran Bhagat pad* 112, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p.111.

<sup>151</sup> Ganga Das, *Nirgun Padhaval*, pad 3; Ganga Das, *Kundalian* p.224, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 111.

<sup>152</sup> In this work he himself writes to be a *Udasi Panthi* and his guru was Ram Das. He belonged to Parashrampur. "Paramanand Udasin", *Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, p. 199

<sup>153</sup> Om Prakash Anand Sharma, *Punjab Mein Rachit Satsai Sahitya Ka Shastriya Adhyayan*, Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, 1983, p.62 as cited in Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye Ka Hindi Sahitya*, p. 97.

<sup>154</sup> Bhartendu informs that Amir Das belonged to Punjab and lived at Amritsar. Chander Kant Bali, *Punjabi Prantiya Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas*, p. 323.

<sup>155</sup> Amir Das, *Istri Krishan Sahitya Sindhu*, Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, 1984 as cited in Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye ka hindi Sahitya*, pp. 98, 99.

<sup>156</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 196-198.

Karshney Poet's poets were worshippers of Lord Krishna known as *Krishna Upasak*. Their poems are related, directly or indirectly to the Krishna *Mahima* and *Bhakti*. Gopal Das poetry was attributed to Lord Krishna. His work depicts his immense love for lord Krishna and as such he was called *Karshne* by his Guru, the name struck to his identity and soon a branch of such poets followed. It shows that *Udāsī* poets were not limited to Sikh Gurus only but had liking for Hindu deities as well. The only difference noticeable among the *Karishne* poets and other *Udāsī* Poets was that former worship Krishna besides following other attributes of *Udāsīs*, while latter struck to the *Udāsī* cult.

Karishne poet was Gopal Das born at Haripur Hazara, in Pakistan in Bagra village, to parents Jawahar Mal and Chandan Devi, in 1862 A.D. His earlier name was Bhagwan Das. He was initiated to *Udāsī* sect in 1883. He was married to Parvati daughter of Jai Ram of Mansera and was blessed with two sons: Parmanand and Hukamchand. Paramanad had no issue while Hukamchand had three daughters. Presently, they are living at Delhi.

He got baptized into *Udāsī* sect, by Gian Das Udasin in 1883 and from Bhagwan Das he became Gopal Das.<sup>157</sup> He died in 1922 at Mathura. Eighteen published works of Gopal Das are available, eleven in Hindi and seven in *Sanskrit*. His Hindi works are: *Playgashtak* 1925, *Karshne Karnabharn and Brajvasolaas*, 1852, *Shri Gopal Vilas*, 1952, *Sneh Patr Ramayan*, 1957, *Puran Vilas and Gopi Chand vinod*, 1966, *Shamsagai and Hari Ashik Panth*, *Prabodh Chandruday Natak*, *Shri Krishan Krira Ka Saar*, *Karshni Vinay*, *Sadhu Sihopanyas*, *Karshni Kirtnam*, and his *Sanskrit* works are: *Bhakti Prakash*, 1915; *Avtar Mimansa*, 1923; *Susadhuta Sudha Sindhu*, 1924; *Shri Krishan Arpan Prarthana*, 1954; *Karshni Kanthabharnam*, 1961 ; *Karshni Ka Vachan or Karshni Kiritam* 1962, *Viragya Bhaskar* (n.d).<sup>158</sup> Out of these 'Gopal Vilas' is the most important. It is written in Braj and it describes all important events associated with the life of Krishna.

The importance of Karishne literature is that it sheds light on the thought process of Karishne poets towards the society. They believed in the existence of *Brahm* and *Atma*. The work of Gopal Das, *Gopal Vilas* is held in great esteem by the people. Like *Ramcharit Manas*, they consider it a of great importance and is recited

<sup>157</sup> Manju Agarwal, *Karishne Udasin Kavi Gopal Das*, p.58; as cited in Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye ka Hindi Sahitya*, p. 84-85.

<sup>158</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 150-152.

by Karishne followers. The works of Karishne poets was greatly influenced by Bhakti movement, Nath Panthis, and the Sufis. Their works depict the picture of society, its customs, traditions and practices along with the polity of that time. Like other *Udāsī Sants*, the writings of Karishne Poets describe the pitiable condition of society.

Like Sant Rein and Kavi Ganga Das the writings of Karishne poets present, a poor picture of the women of those times. In their view a woman should not be trusted as she could go to an extent of killing her children and even husband and above all could pretend to be, in grief, over their death. They are not pure at heart.<sup>159</sup> But this view about women does not seem to be correct. It was nothing new such kind of opinion against women existed since past ages and portrayed male chauvinism. Man had always portrayed women as a commodity and has put all blames on her for his misfortunes. Karishne Poets have also given description about different kinds of make-up used by women and explains many types of ornaments *tikka*, *bindi*, lip colour, alkyl (*kajal*), rings, earrings and earstuds, bangles, necklace, nose studs and anklets etc.<sup>160</sup> Their writings also give us the picture of British administrators who had adopted the policy of discrimination against the Indians.<sup>161</sup> They have criticized their administration as it failed to look after the public interest. They emphasised on truthfulness and were of the opinion that it always triumphed.

A commentary or *Tika* on Sant Gulab Singh's *Prabodh Chandra Natak* is written by Sant Jwala Das. His work was published from Amritsar in 1867 A.D. He refers to Guru Gobind Singh as a protector of Hinduism.<sup>162</sup>

There have been three *Sant Rein*: First sant Rein was *Mahant* of that Sadhu Mandli on whom Guru Nanak spent the amount given by his father for a business, episode known as *Saccha Sauda*. Second Sant Rein was from Bhudan *Udāsī Dera*, writer of *Nanak Vijay* and the third was, Baba Prem Singh Sant Rein, composer of *Gurpur Prakash*. Baba Prem Singh's composition *Gurpur prakash* is in four volumes and it has beautifully described Guru Nanak's life in 328 pages.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Gopal Das, Krishan Krika Ka Saar, p.25 Gopal Das, Puran Vilas, p.83-84 , as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 157.

<sup>160</sup> Gopal Das, *Puran Vilas*, p. 77 as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 157.

<sup>161</sup> *Gopal Vilas*, p. 43, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 157.

<sup>162</sup> "Jwala Das Sant", Davinder Singh vidyarthi (ed.), *Sri Guru Gobind Singh Abhinandan*, Guru Nanak Studies Department, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1983, p. 322.

<sup>163</sup> *Gurpur Prakash*, Bhumika 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1965, Amritsar, page (cited in, *Sri Guru Nanak Abhinandan*), p. 395-396.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਤਾਰ  
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਤਾਰ ਸੋ ਲੀਨਸ ਜਗ ਅਵਤਾਰ ।  
 ਸਰਨ ਪਰਹਿ ਜੋ ਤਿਨਹੂੰ ਕੀ ਹੋਤ ਸਹਿਲ ਭਵ ਪਾਰ ॥ ੬ ॥  
 ਧਰ ਅਨੰਤ ਦੇਵਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤੂ ।  
 ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਹੋ ਬੇਦੀ ਕੁਲ ਕੇਤੂ ।  
 ਭਗਤ ਜਗਤ ਮਧ ਬਿਦਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਕੋ  
 ਕਲਮਲ ਦੁਸ਼ਟਨ ਦੰਭ ਹਰਨ ਕੋ ॥ ੭ ॥  
 ਕਲ ਮੈ ਪਾਵਨ ਪੰਥ ਨਰਨ ਕੋ ।  
 ਦੋਵ ਸਤ ਸੰਗਤ ਜਗਤ ਤਰਨ ਕੋ ।  
 ਨਾਮ ਜਪਾਵਨ ਧਯਾ ਚਰਨ ਕੋ ।  
 ਭਗਤਨ ਦੁੱਖ ਕਟ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਕੋ ॥ ੮ ॥

He writes that in order to put an end to the evils, put away the feeling of pride and to teach the lesson of *Sach Nam* Guru Nanak has come to this world.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਰੂਪ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ  
 ਦੇਨ ਆਸਰਾ ਏਕ ਸਰਨ ਕੋ ।  
 ਕੁਮਤ ਕੁਚਾਲ ਕੁਕਰਮ ਹਰਨ ਕੋ ।  
 ਪੀਰ ਪੀਰ ਸਿਰ ਨੀਵ ਕਰਨ ਕੋ ।  
 ਸਚ ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਜਾਪ ਕਰਨ ਕੋ ॥ ੯ ॥  
 ਪਰਾਲਬਦ ਹੈ ਤਨ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਲੋ ।  
 ਸੇਵ ਸਿਰੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਗ ਤੋ ਲੋ ॥ ੧੦ ॥  
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਰੂਪ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ ।  
 ਕਲ ਨਰ ਤਾਰਨ ਕੋ ਤਨ ਧਾਰਾ ।  
 ਧਰ ਸਰਧਾ ਦਰਸਹੁ ਦੁਖ ਦਾਹੂ ।  
 ਜਗ ਜੀਵਨ ਕੋ ਲੇਵਹੁ ਲਾਹੁ ॥ ੧੧ ॥

Guru Nanak's face is glowing and fresh like lotus. Hindu's and Muslim's all are his followers.

ਸਤਯ ਗਯਾਨ ਘਨ ਰੂਪ  
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਸਤਯ ਗਯਾਨ ਘਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ।  
 ਬਿਗਸੇ ਕਮਲ ਬਿਸਾਲ ਸੁ ਬਦਨ ਅਨੂਪ ਹੈ ।  
 ਹਰਖ ਸੋਕ ਜਹਿ ਨਹੀ ਅਨੰਦਹਿ ਏਕ ਰਸ ॥ ੧੨ ॥  
 ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਅਨਕ ਚਲ ਆਵਹਿ ।  
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇ ਚਰਣ ਅਨਾਵਹਿ ।  
 ਇਕ ਮੁਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਕ ਹੋਵਹਿ ॥  
 ਲੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਸੁ ਕਲਮਲ ਖੋਵਹਿ ॥ ੧੩ ॥  
 ਗੁਮ ਨਗਰ ਤਹਿੰਗੀ ਨਰ ਜੇਤੋ ।  
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੀਰਤ ਕਰਹੀ ਤੇਤੋ ।  
 ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਾਰੀ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ਜੋਉ ।  
 ਜੋਗੀ ਸੰਨਯਾਸੀ ਹੂੰ ਕੋਉ ॥ ੧੪ ॥  
 ਨੀਚ ਕਿ ਉਚ ਰਾਉ ਕੈ ਰੰਕਾ ।  
 ਸੁਜਸ ਉਚਾ ਰਹਿ ਸਭ ਅਕਲੰਕਾ ।  
 ਪੰਡਤ ਅਪਰ ਅਪੰਡਤ ਜਹਿ ਤਹਿ ।  
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੀਰਤ ਕਰਹੀ ਮਹਿ ਮਹਿ ॥ ੧੫ ॥

Guru Nanak is a light of hope for all those who flock around him as the *Sewak* is happy for his *Isht* same way Nanak followers except him as *Pati Parmeshwar*.

ਜੋਤਿ ਬਿਸਾਲ ਬਿਰਾਜਹਿ  
 ਮੁਖ ਸੁੰਦਰਫ ਜਹਿ ਅਤੀ ਸੁਹਾਈ ।  
 ਲਘੁ ਤਨ ਜੋਤਿ ਬਿਸਾਲ ਬਿਰਾਜਹਿ ।  
 ਜਿਉ ਬਟ ਅਖੇ ਰੂਪ ਲਘੁ ਛਾਜਹਿ ॥ ੧੬ ॥  
 ਪੁਲਕਿਓ ਪਰਮ-ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਮੈ ਮਨੂਆਂ ।  
 ਬੰਦਨ ਕਰ ਜਾਨਿਓ ਨਿਜ ਧਨੂਆਂ ।  
 ਜਿਉ ਜਨ ਇਸ਼ਟ ਦੇਵ ਕੇ ਦੇਖੀ ।  
 ਤਿਉ ਉਰ ਮੇ ਭਾ ਮੋਦ ਵਿਸੇਖੀ ॥ ੧੭ ॥  
 ਅਰੁਨ ਚਰਨ ਬਰ ਮ੍ਰਿਦੁਲ ਸੁਹਾਵੈ ।  
 ਭੁਜ-ਆਜਾਨ ਕੰਧ ਉਚ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ੧੮ ॥  
 ਉਹ ਆਯੁਤ ਮੁਖ ਚੰਦ ਭਿਰਾਮਾ ।  
 ਦਹਿਨੇ ਚਮਰ ਛਤਰ ਕਰ ਬਾਮਾ ।  
 ਸੁਣ ਕਾਠੂ ਸੁਤ ਤੋਹਿ ਬਿਚਛਨ ।  
 ਇਸ ਮੈ ਲਖੀਅਤ ਬਤੀ ਸੁਲਛਨ ॥ ੧੯ ॥

Bawa Ram Das's famous unpublished work *Bani Ram Das* was influenced by Braj and Punjabi. His another work *Pratar Prakash Granth* was published in 1891, due to the efforts of Maharaja Narender Singh of Patiala with whom he had cordial relations. His other works are *Vird Pratap* 1802.<sup>164</sup> He had immensely praised Guru Nanak in his compositions.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>164</sup> His composition period according Jagannath Sharma is considered to be from 1880-1920 AD, but Chander Kant Bali and Davinder Singh Vidyarthi considers his composition period to be 1823 and 1821 respectively. Shiv Singh, Shiv Singh Saroj; Lucknow, 1883 A.D., p.151-505 as cited in Davinder Singh Vidyarthi, *Guru Gobind Singh Abhinandan*, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar, 1983, p. 142; Davinder Singh Vidyarthi, *Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, p.148; Also see, Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye ka Hindi Sahitya*, p. 144. His reference is also found in *Shiv Singh Saroj*.

<sup>165</sup> *Bani*, MS No. 263, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar as cited in Davinder Singh Vidyarthi, *Guru Gobind Singh Abhinandan*, p. 142; Davinder Singh Vidyarthi, *Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, p. 148.

ਤਰੀਐ ਦੁੱਖ ਸਿੰਧੁ  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇ ਬਲ-ਬਲ ਜਾਵੈ ।  
ਬਾਰ-ਬਾਰ ਚਰਨੀ ਚਿੱਤ ਲਾਵੈ ।  
ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਉਰ ਧਰੀਐ ।  
ਭੈ ਸਾਗਰ ਤੇ ਪਾਰ ਉਤਰੀਐ ।  
ਤਰੀਐ ਦੁੱਖ ਸਿੰਧ ਮਹਾ ਭੈ ਸਾਗਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਕਰੀ ।  
ਆਠੋਂ ਪਹਿਰ ਘੜੀ ਪਲ ਮੂਰਤ ਨਿਸ ਦਿਨ ਜਪੀਐ ਨਾਮ ਹਰੀ ।  
ਦਰਸਨ ਗੁਰਦਿਆਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰ ਦੀਨਾ ਦੁਰਮਤ ਦੁਵਿਧਾ ਸਭ ਹਰੀ ।  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਸਮਰਥ ਸਰਬ ਬਿਧ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਤੇ ਕਛੂ ਨ ਸਰੀ  
ਤ੍ਰੇਤੇ ਜਨਕ ਬਿਦੇਹਿ ਕਲੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹਾਏ ।  
ਕਰ ਪੂਰਨ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਅਪ ਜਗ ਤਾਰਨ ਆਏ ।  
ਸ਼ਬਦ ਚਾਂਦਨਾ ਧਾਰ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸੀ ।  
ਉਧਰੇ ਸੁਰਿ ਨਰ ਸਗਲ ਨਾਗ ਪਾਤਾਲਹਿ ਬਾਸੀ ।  
ਜਿੰਨ ਭੂਤ ਰਾਕਸ ਤਰੈ ਛਿੰਨਵੈ ਕੋਟ ਉਧਾਰਯੋ ।  
ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਬਲਿਹਾਰਨੇ ਜਗਤ ਗੁਰ ਜਗ ਤਾਰਿਯੋ ॥ ੪ ॥

Ram Das writes that his heart becomes joyous on the very thought of explaining the meaning of Nanak. Nanak is the real name of forgiveness.

ਗੁਰ ਕਰ ਨ ਅੰਤਾ  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਦ ਕਮਲ ਮਲ ਤਨ ਬਚ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਮਿ ॥  
ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਦਯਾ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਤੇ ਮਿਸਟ ਲਗੈ ਗੁਣ ਰਾਮ ॥ ੮ ॥  
ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੋ ਅਰਥ ਸੁਨਾਉਂ ।  
ਹੁਲਸੇ ਮਤਿ ਕਿਹਿ ਭਾਂਤ ਛਪਾਉਂ ॥  
ਗੋ ਅਗਯਾਨ ਸੁ ਹੈ ਤਮ ਭਾਰੀ ।  
ਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ ਸਬ ਜਨ ਸੁਖ ਕਾਰੀ ॥  
ਗੋ ਨਿਵਾਰਿ ਰੁ ਗਯਾਨ ਉਪਾਵੈ ॥  
ਸੰਗਯਕ ਸੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇਵ ਕਹਾਵੈ ॥  
ਅਨਿਕ ਰਹਿਤ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮ ਜੋਈ ।  
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹੈ ਪਰਮਾਤਮ ਕੋਈ ॥ ੧੪੦ ॥  
ਸਭ ਲਖਸਣ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਕੇ ।  
ਬਿਨੁ ਸੁ ਉਪਾਧਿ ਹਿਤੁ ਸਭ ਹੀਕੇ ।  
ਦੰਭ ਕਪਟ ਛਲ ਛਿਦ੍ਰ ਨ ਜਾਨੇ ।  
ਮ੍ਰਿਖਾ ਬਚਨ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਨ ਬਖਾਨੇ ॥  
ਮੁਦ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਮੋਤ੍ਰਿ ਉਪੇਖਯਾ ਕਰਣਾ ।  
ਹਿਯ ਸੁ ਬਿਰਾਜੈ ਸੂਰਨਾ ਭਰਣਾ ॥  
ਸਮਦ ਆਧਿ ਖਟ ਸੰਪਦਾਵੰਤਾ ।  
ਦੁਦੰਭ ਰਹਿਤ ਗੁਨ ਕਰ ਨ ਅੰਤਾ ॥ ੧੪ ॥

The poet Ram Das explains that Guru gave equality and honour to the poor. He is merciful to everybody who needs him. Whoever takes shelter in Nanak named ship, gets emancipated. Who

Pandit Mohan Lal,<sup>166</sup> Antarjami Udasi,<sup>167</sup> and Kushal Das were other poets of this period. Kushal Das's composition *Guru Nanak Satotar* showed influence of *Braj, Punjabi and Khari*.<sup>168</sup>

destroys the darkness of ignorance and leads towards enlightenment, who fulfills every desire is Nanak.

ਕੀਨੇ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰ  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਿਆਲ ਪਰ ਸਦਕੇ ਕਰਉ ਸਰੀਰ  
ਰੁਲਦੇ ਰੰਕ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਕਰ ਕੀਨੇ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰ ॥ ੫੬ ॥  
...ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਣ ਨਿਧਿ ਦੀਨ ਦਿਆਲ  
ਤਾਰੇ ਮਧਿ ਖੰਡ ਸੁਰਗੁ ਪਿਆਲ ।  
ਕਲਿਜੁਗਿ ਬੋਹਿਬ ਸਬਦ ਦੁਧਾਰਿ ।  
ਪਲ ਮਹਿ ਕੀਤੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟ ਪਾਰ ॥ ੨੦ ॥  
ਜਿਨ ਜਿਨ ਲੀਨੀ ਚਰਨਨ ਓਟ ।  
ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਭਏ ਛੋਟ ।  
ਕਾਲ ਜਾਲ ਨਹੀ ਪਰਤ ਆਇ ।  
ਜਲ ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਜਾਇ ॥ ੨੧ ॥  
ਮੈਂ ਮਤਿ ਮੰਦ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਦੀਨ ।  
ਜਾਪ ਤਾਪ ਮਹਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਕੀਨ ।  
ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਦਰ ਪਰਿਓ ਹਾਰਿ ।  
ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਕਰੋ ਪਾਰਿ ॥ ੨੨ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੨੦ ॥

<sup>166</sup> He was follower of Ganga Das and was born in Meerut around 1850 A.D. at Paanchi Village. His period of composition is considered to be between 1850 to 1930 A.D. He has eight Books to his credit, of which only two are available *Bhajan Sia Savayambar* and *Nirgum Pad*. *Bhajan Sia* was published by Jawahar Book Depot, Gujar Bazar, Meerut but date of publication is not available and the language is Puru, *Khari Boli*. It consists of 32 pages. It appears that, it was published after 1934 A.D. The other work *Nirgam Pad*, is hand written work, in shape of a small booklet of 7"×9" (seven inches by nine inches), year not known. It carries signature of Pritam Dutt Sharma at the end. Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Samparda Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 191-192.

<sup>167</sup> In *Sakhi Prakash* manuscript, word 'Udasi' is used along with Antarjami. On the basis of manuscript, Antarjami is assigned period of early nineteenth century. His available compositions are *Jeev Prakash*, *Guru Sikh Samvaad*, *Antarjami*, *Sakhi Prakash* and *Aatam Prakash*. Gobind Nath Raj Guru, "Udasi Sampardai di Puratan Punjabi Vartak nu Den", *Khoj Patrika Puratan Vartak Vishesh Ank*, (ed.). Very few prose compositions or prose works by *Udasi* Sants have been available but compositions of Anadghan and Antarjami have special place in Punjabi prose. Rattan Singh Jaggi, Publication Bureau Patiala, 1997, pp. 363, 364;

<sup>168</sup> His Guru's name was Sri Brahm Krishan. He had following in the areas of Fazilka, Bangla and Choonia etc. It is said that he composed *Guru Nanak Satotar* on request of Punnu Ram who was his follower and a great devotee of *Guru Nanak*. He doesn't give any reference to the year of composition. Apart from Keshwa Nand he had another follower Kishnanand. On this account, his period can be considered mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. "Kushal Das", *Sri Guru Nanak Abhinandan*, pp. 309-329.

ਕਰੋ ਗੁਰ ਵੰਦਨ  
ਦੇਵਨ ਦੇਵ ਕਰੋ ਗੁਰ ਵੰਦਨ ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੁਖ ਮਾਹਿ ਉਚਾਰੀ ।  
ਦੋ ਕਰ ਜੋੜ ਧਰੋ ਚਰਨਾਂ ਪਰ ਜਾਉ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ।  
ਕਾਨ ਸੁਨੋ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਉਪਮਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰੋ ਹਿਯਧਾਰੀ ।  
ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੇਵਕ ਆਇ ਪਰਯੋ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਧੰਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇਵ ਪਰੋ ਸਭ ਜਾਣਨ ਹਾਰੀ ।  
ਰਾਮ ਹਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਹਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਮ ਹਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਮ ਮੁਰਾਰੀ ।  
ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਹਰੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਹਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਹਰੇ ਜਿਨ ਦ੍ਰੋ ਪਤਿ ਤਾਰੀ ।  
ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇਵਕ ਆਇ ਪਰਯੋ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ ॥ ੨ ॥

Writer says that Nanak has come to the world to give sermon of *Jaap*.

ਲਹੋ ਸੁਖ ਪੰਥ  
ਬਾਵਨ ਰੂਪ ਧਰਯੋ ਸਤ ਹੀ ਯੁਗ ਮੈ ਪੁਨ ਰਾਮ ਤ੍ਰੇ ਤੇ ਭੇ ਅਵਤਾਰੀ ।  
ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਸਰੂਪ ਭਯੋ ਪੁਨ ਦਵਾਪਰ ਕੰਸ ਗਹਯੋ ਤਿਨ ਪਾਨ ਨਿਕਾਰੀ ।  
ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਭਯੋ ਕਲ ਹੀ ਯੁਗ ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਉਪਦੇਸ ਉਦਾਰੀ ॥  
ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇਵਕ ਆਇ ਪਰਯੋ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ ॥ ੩ ॥  
ਗੰਗ ਗੁਦਾਵਰਿ ਤਾਪਸਿ ਸਾਧਨ ਔਰ ਅਨੇਕ ਰਚੇ ਸੁਖਕਾਰੀ ।

The women writers of this period were **Suvachana Dassi, Vijay Kaur, Laxmi Bai, Srimati Rattan Faujdar** etc. Suvachna Dassi was born in village Dehma, District Gazipur, Uttar Pradesh in 1871 AD. Her Father name was Singarlal.<sup>169</sup> At the age of fourteen she married Jugal Kishore of Ballia. Later on she became the disciple of Hira Das. Her works are *Prem Tirangni*, *Vigyan Sagar* and *Videh Moksh Prakash*.<sup>170</sup> It is significant to note that though very rare but, there were a few *Udāsī* centres which did not have any gender bias. For example, one of the ancestors of Pritam Bhavan, Udasin Ashram, Jalandhar, who shifted here after

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ਸੇਸ ਮਹੇਸ਼ ਗਣੇਸ਼ ਦਿਨਸ ਨਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਕਰੋ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ।  
 ਵੇਦ ਉਚਾਰ ਕਰਯੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਲਹੋ ਸੁਖ ਪੰਥ ਸੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਧਾਰੀ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੇਵਕ ਆਇ ਪਰਯੋ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ ॥ ੮ ॥

*Gur Nanak is Niranjana, who has come to emancipate the people through his Panth.*

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੋਤ੍ਰ  
 ਇੰਦਵ ਛੰਦ  
 ਆਇ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਧਾਰ ਕਿ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ।  
 ਲੋਕ ਸੁਨਯੋ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਸੁਨਯੋ ਬਿਪਿਲੋਕ ਸੁਨਯੋ ਸਭ ਦਰਸਨ ਪਾਯੋ ।  
 ਸੰਗਤਿ ਪਾਰ ਉਤਾਰਨ ਕੋ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਸੁ ਪੰਥ ਚਲਾਯੋ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ॥ ੧ ॥  
 ਪੂਰਨ ਰੂਪ ਅਨੰਤ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਖੰਡ ਅਨੂਪ ਸੁ ਦੇਵਨ ਗਾਯੋ ।  
 ਦੀਨਨ ਕੇ ਦੁੱਖ ਹਾਰਨ ਕੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਸੁ ਨਾਮ ਧਰਾਯੋ ।  
 ਤੀਨ ਪੁਰੀ ਜਸ ਪੂਰ ਹਰਯੋ ਸਮਤਾ ਦਮਤਾ ਸਭ ਮਾਹਿ ਬਤਾਯੋ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ॥ ੨ ॥  
 ਭੇਦ ਅਤੀਤ ਅਭੀਤ ਸਦਾ, ਅਜ ਵੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਸਨਾਤਨ ਗਾਯੋ ।  
 ਤੀਨ ਗੁਣੋ ਯੁਤਿ ਜਾਨ ਕੇ ਭੀਤਰ ਬਾਹਿਰ ਨੀਤ ਸੁ ਜੋਇ ਸਮਾਯੋ ।  
 ਤਾਰਨ ਹੇਤ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕਲਿਕਾਲ ਕਿ ਭੀਤਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਰਖਾਯੋ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ॥ ੩ ॥  
 ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ  
 ਆਇ ਤੇ ਅੰਤ ਨਹੀ ਜਿਨਕਾ  
 ਯਹ ਆਗਮ ਸਾਰ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਸੁ ਗਾਯੋ ।  
 ਸੇਸ ਦਿਨੇਸ਼ ਗਣੇਸ਼ ਭਜੇ ਨਿਤ ਹੀ  
 ਵਹ ਨਾਨਕ ਵੇਦ ਬਤਾਯੋ ।  
 ਚੋਦਹ ਲੋਕ ਸੁ ਪੂਰ ਰਹੀ ਧੁਨਿ  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਭਾਯੋ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ  
 ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ॥ ੭ ॥  
 ਰੂਪ ਨ ਰੰਗ ਨ ਅੰਗ ਨ ਸੰਗ  
 ਨ ਮਾਤ ਨ ਤਾਤ ਨ ਵੇਦ ਬਤਾਯੋ ।  
 ਭਕਤਿ ਅਧੀਨ ਤਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਰੂਪ  
 ਅਨੂਪ ਸਰੂਪ ਰਹਯੋ ਛਬ ਛਾਯੋ ।  
 ਸੰਤਨ ਰੰਜਨ ਭੰਜਨ ਪਾਪ ਸੁ  
 ਖੰਡਨ ਰੋਗ ਮਹਾਂ ਸੁਖਦਾਯੋ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ  
 ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ॥ ੮ ॥  
 ਦੇਵਨ ਦੇਵ ਅਨੂਪ ਮਹਾਂ ਜਿਸ  
 ਰੂਪ ਅਨੇਕ ਬਨਾਇ ਖਪਾਯੋ ।  
 ਸੇਵਕ ਅੰਗਤ ਆਇ ਭਯੋ ਪੁਨ  
 ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇਬਯ ਕਹਾਯੋ ।  
 ਫੇਰ ਅਸੰਗ ਰਹੇ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਯਹ  
 ਵੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਭਲੀ ਬਿਧਿ ਗਾਯੋ ।  
 ਵਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ  
 ਤਾਰਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਜਗ ਆਯੋ ॥ ੯ ॥

<sup>169</sup> Vishnu Datt Rakesh, *Acharya Sri Chandra, Sadhna, Sidhant aur Sahitya*, p. 179.

<sup>170</sup> Parshuram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat Ki Sant Parampra*, pp. 425-426.



partition had a woman named Sukhan as head of their institution at Wasu Asthana of district Jhang in West Pakistan from 1863 to 1903 and in 1903 before her death she also nominated Pritam Das as her successor of Nirvan Hari Das establishment. It is also said the tree under which she used to worship was known as *Sach Di Ber* till 1947. Dera Ram Rai at Dehradun, was managed and headed for fifty four years by the the fourth wife of Guru Ram Rai, named Mata Punjab Kaur. She also appointed a *Sadhu* from Balu Hasna *Dhuan* as her successor because she didn't have her own son.<sup>171</sup>

Vijay Kaur was born in about 1880 A.D. at Meerut. She was a follower of Maha Kavi Ganga Das. Her name Vijay Kaur or Jiya Kaur is held in high esteem amongst the *Udāsīs*.<sup>172</sup> She belonged to village Bhattipura, in Meerut. She was married to a twenty seven years old, Chandhary Lal of village Khanpur, in Meerut in 1951 *Samvat* i.e. 1894 AD. After, she became widow, she came in contact with Mahatma Ganga Das and joined his sect who named her Vijay Kaur.<sup>173</sup> After Sant Ganga Das's death in 1913 A.D, his composition *Mahabharat* was published in 1920 A.D. and it was due to the efforts of Vijay Kaur. One copy of this composition is kept at Ganga Das Hindi Sansthan, 3364- Ramnagar, Delhi 110032. No independent published work of Vijay Kaur is available but in the writings of Ganga Das, at many places, her commentaries can be seen, which shows her devotion to her Guru and river Ganga.<sup>174</sup>

Laxmi Bai belonged to Bedi caste. In her writings, she has used her name as Bibi Lacchmi. In her work *Lakshmi Hulas Sagar* she has claimed that she was the fifteenth descendant of Guru Nanak's dynasty.<sup>175</sup> She was born at Nanak Chak, post office Fatehgarh, Tehsil Batala, in District Gurdaspur in Punjab.<sup>176</sup> She completed her work *Lakshmi Hulas Sagar* in 1972 *Samvat*, i.e 1915 AD.<sup>177</sup> Though she has written many granths such as: *Shri Chandra Prakash*, *Laxmi Hulas Sagar*, *Sandeh Aagreh*

<sup>171</sup> Manmohan Sehgal, *Shiv Sarup Sri Chander*, Swami Sant Das Publication, Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, p. 233; See The Document of a Registry attached in the Appendix VI ; Brahmanand Udasin, *Guru Udasin Mat Darpan*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>172</sup> Vishnu Datt Rakesh, *Acharya Sri Chandra, Sadhna, Sidhant aur Sahitya*, p. 179.

<sup>173</sup> Ganga Das, *Udhyog Parv*, first page, as quoted by Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, 236.

<sup>174</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Samparda Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 236-237.

<sup>175</sup> Lacchmi Bai, *Laxmi Hulas Sagar*, P. 708, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, 229.

<sup>176</sup> *Loc.cit*

<sup>177</sup> Lacchmi Bai, *Laxmi Hulas Sagar*, P. 708, as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, 229.

and *Gyan Prabodh*,<sup>178</sup> but the only available Granth is *Laxmi Hulas Sagar*. It is in the library of Guru Mandal Mayapuri, Haridwar. This Granth is mixture of many issues of human life i.e. religion, politics, history, stories, poems communalism, beauty of nature and birds etc.

Shri Mati Rattan Faujdar was born in 1909 A.D.<sup>179</sup> She was intermediate qualified. Her poetic compositions about forty in number are hand written. Her published poetic compositions are: *Gangadhara*, *Prem Rattan*, *Acharya Sri Chandr* and *Yogeshwar Guru Gangeshwar* and *Guru Stuti Rattan*.<sup>180</sup>

The other *Udāsī* writers were **Sharda Ram**<sup>181</sup>, **Bishan Das**<sup>182</sup>, **Soham Muni Falahari**, **Karshne Krishan Das**, **Swami Brahmanand**, **Govind Ram**, **Gurdas Udasi**, **Des Raj**, **Nigmanand paramhans**, **Pritam Das Nirban**, **Jwala Prakash**, **Harichander Das**, **Sachidanand**, **Gian Das**, **Surjan Das** etc.

As regards, the *Udāsīs* contribution to the religion and philosophy of the times, we find that some of the *Udāsī Mahants* were well known as scholars of *Sanskrit* and expounders of the *Vedantic* philosophy<sup>183</sup>. Ganesh Das, found Bhai Makhan Singh, an *Udāsī Fakir*, well known for his knowledge of God and well versed in the *Shastras* and medicine.<sup>184</sup> In the absence of direct control and direction by the State, indigenous education in the Punjab during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries was given in the socio-religious institutions of the various groups including the *Udāsīs*. Important Sikh religious centres known as *dharamsalas*, *Gurdwaras* or the *darbars* were under the control and management of the *Udāsī Mahants*. In the mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century, a British administrator G.W.Lietner, observed “there was not a mosque a

<sup>178</sup> Shobha Prashar, *Udasi Sampardaye Ka Hindi Sahitya*, p. 137.

<sup>179</sup> She writes, her husband was a religious and pious person, she was blessed with a daughter, in 1939 A.D. Along with her daughter and husband she went to Switzerland and Geneva. In 1942 she felt detached and on 9-11-1947, she along with her husband got initiated from Swami Gangeshvranand.Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*. p, 238 and 272.

<sup>180</sup> Jagannath Sharma, *Udasi Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, pp. 238-40.

<sup>181</sup> Three published works of Sharda Ram are: *Nirgun Maha Ramayan* (2 parts). It consists of 557 pages. It has eight chapters. It gives detailed description of Ram, Ravan, Vibhishan and other important events related to Ramayan. The year of its composition is i.e 1927 AD. The second composition of Sharda Ram is *Bhagatvat Kiran*. It consists of 601 pages and Nine chapters, published from Ram Tekri *Udasin* Garhm Poona. The third work is *Yukti Pradhan Granth*. It consists of 708 pages: Sita Ram Chaturvedi, *Bharat Ke Udasin Sant*, Akhil Bhartiye Vikram Parishad, Kashi, 1967 A.D), p.294. Also see *Nirgun Maharamayan*, Baba Sharda Ram Ki Sankshipt Jivani as cited in Jagannath Sharma, *Udasin Sampardaye Ke Hindi Kavi Aur Unka Sahitya*, p. 185.

<sup>182</sup> His compositions are *Sri Bedi Bansaye Harinam Singh Ur Ki Sanka Jaamni Nirvaran Patrika*, and *Updesh Chintamani*: “Sant Bishan Das”, *Sri Guru Gobind Singh Abhinandan*, p. 474.

<sup>183</sup> Wilson, H.H. *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p-149.; Lapel H Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs*, p-610.

<sup>184</sup> Grewal, J.S. and Indu Banga, *Early Nineteenth Century Punjab*, pp. 31-36.

temple a *dharmsala* that had not a school attached to it, to which the village youth flocked chiefly for religious education.<sup>185</sup> Significantly, separate Schools of *Gurmukhi* and *Sanskrit* were found attached with some of the famous *Udāsī akharas*. The akhara of Ghumand Das, *Mahant* Balanand in Amritsar City and dharmsala of *Mahant* Nanak Chand at Rashidpur in Jhang may be referred in this context.<sup>186</sup> *Udāsī* institution giving instructions both in *Gurmukhi* and *Sanskrit* were found scattered over more than half a dozen district of the Punjab in districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Montgomoery, Bannu, Jhang, Ludhiana and Jalandhar.<sup>187</sup> *Udāsī* Centres imparting religious education outside the Punjab were located as Beneras, Vrindavan and Haridwar.<sup>188</sup> *Akhara Brahmbutta* of Baba Santokh Das at Amritsar and the dharmsalas at Dera Baba Nanak, Nankana, Bhai Pheru, Phuman Shah, Dipalpur, Rashidpur, Maghiana, Chaharpur, Harnali and kotla Shamshpur,<sup>189</sup> were famous learning centres of *Gurmukhi* and *Sanskrit*. The *Mahant* of akhara Brahmbuta, Amritsar was once a time a member of the Amritsar Municipality.

About six persons were receiving instruction in *Sanskrit* literature in *akhara Ghumand Das* at Amritsar.<sup>190</sup> About thirty pupils were getting education in *Sanskrit* Grammar and poetry in the Santokhsar Shivala attached to *Akhara Santokh Das* in Amritsar City<sup>191</sup>. *Mahant* Santokh Das and Pritam Das gathered a large number of *chelas*, popularly known as *Bankhandi Jamat* and their contribution to the cause of learning was valuable<sup>192</sup>. The *akhara* of *Mahant* Balanand and the *Dharmsala* of *Mahant* Nanak Chand also deserve mention in this context<sup>193</sup>. A charitable school was associated with the akhara of Balanand<sup>194</sup>.

Lietner gives references to more than a dozen *Udāsī akharas* and *Dharmsalas* giving instructions<sup>195</sup>. The pupils were taught the sacred scriptures of the Sikhs and the Hindus, besides some other subjects of fundamental character including arithmetic

<sup>185</sup> G.W.Lietner, *History of Indigenous Education in Punjab*, Introduction.

<sup>186</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7, January 1853, no-219, cases-3,4,12,19,20 ; 14 January 1853, no-241, cases-24-25-28.

<sup>187</sup> G.W.Lietner, *History of indigenous Education in Punjab*, pp. 34,41,51,59,73,79, 80, 89, 100, 177.

<sup>188</sup> G.S.Ghuyre, *Indian Sadhus*, p. 146.

<sup>189</sup> G.W.Lietner, *History of indigenous Education in Punjab*, 1882, Calcutta, part-II pp-34,41,51,59,73,79, 80, 82, 89, 100, 177.

<sup>190</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7, January 1853, no. 219, Cases 3.

<sup>191</sup> G.W.Lietner, *History of indigenous Education in Punjab*, p. 55.

<sup>192</sup> Madanjit Kaur, 'The contribution of the Bunga's *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala, 1978, p. 96.

<sup>193</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7, January 1853, no-219, Case 1.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid*, 7, January 1853, no-219, Case 3.

<sup>195</sup> G. W. Lietner, *History of indigenous Education in Punjab* 1882, Calcutta, part-II, pp 34, 41, 51, 59, 73, 80, 82, 89, 100, & 177.

or multiplication tables and certain works on science and morals<sup>196</sup>. Occasionally instruction was given in *Lande*, Urdu, Persian or Arabic. Bhai Amar Das *Udāsī* was well known for teaching Urdu, Persian and Arithmetic to about nine students at his *Dharmshala* in Jhelum District<sup>197</sup>. The contribution of the *Udāsī Mahants* to learning traditions of Indian Culture in general and the Punjabi society in particular should not be underestimated. By giving instructions gratuitously in their centres, they partly contributed in preserving the tradition of indigenous education though it faded gradually as a result of the new English education system<sup>198</sup>.

Regarding public activity of the *Udāsīs*, it would be worthwhile to refer to some of the major *Udāsīs* institution with which were attached the *baolis*, tanks, *katcha* and *pucca* wells and ponds.<sup>199</sup> About half a dozen *akharas* and the *dharmshalas*, were well known for running *langar*. It was a regular feature of almost all the major *Udāsī* institutions found scattered over in the districts of Amritsar, Lahore, Shahpur, Jhang, Sialkot, Montgomery and Ludhiana. The number of inmates beings fed clothed, towards the end of Sikh rule, in Akhara Santokh Das and dera Bhai Pheru was about 300 and 200 respectively, In the majority of the institutions their number ranged between ten to twenty five<sup>200</sup>. The Annual expenditure on the daily food of the resident sadhs of the dera of Bhai Pirthi in Lahore, amounted to about Rs.1800<sup>201</sup>. *Mahant* Gursharan Das of the institution at Heran in Ludhiana distributed about 8000 maunds of grain to the public during the famine of 1862 in Punjab<sup>202</sup>.

During the Gurdwara Reform Movement the scene was much changed. Many *Udāsī* and Non-*Udāsī* compositions were written. Pandit Brahma Nand Udasin wrote *Guru Udāsī n Mat Darpan*, Randir Singh wrote *Udāsī Sikhan Di Vithiya* and

<sup>196</sup> *Reports on the Revised Settlement of Shahpur District*, Lahore, 1866, para 105, p-52; G.W. Lietner, *History of indigenous Education in Punjab*, part-II pp-80, 134; Kirpal Singh, 'Social Change in Amritsar', *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1978, p. 143.

<sup>197</sup> Madanjit Kaur, 'The contribution of the Bunga's', p. 96; G.W. Lietner, *History of indigenous Education in Punjab*, part-II, pp. 37, 89, 152.

<sup>198</sup> Sulakhan Singh, "Role of the Udasis in Socio Cultural History of the Punjab : Late 18<sup>th</sup> and Early 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries". *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala, 1989, p. 123; <http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Udasi>.

<sup>199</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14, January 1853, no-241, case-26, : *ibid* .14 January 1853, no. 241 case-21: 23 June 1854, no 204-205, case 7 : 7, January 1853, no. 219, Case 12,

<sup>200</sup> *Final Reports on the Revision of Settlement of the Ludhiana District in the Punjab*, 1878-83, p-42: *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7, January 1853, no-219; 27 May 1853, no 202, *Ludhiana District Gazetteer* 1888-89, pp 79, 80; *Census of India* 1891, part-1, vol XIX, p. 152.

<sup>201</sup> *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 27, May 1853, no. 202, case 33.

<sup>202</sup> *Ludhiana District Gazetteer* 1858-59, p. 79.

Shiv Ram Udasin also wrote *Udāsī an da Sacha Itihas*. All these works were written with sectarian and communal bias and are highly polemical.

In the early twenties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. a European traveller, William Moorcroft visited an *Udāsī* institution at Kartarpur, Jalandhar, where he was hospitably received<sup>203</sup>. Amritsar and Sialkot institutions provided special accommodation to a large number of people on the eve of Diwali and Baisakhi festivals<sup>204</sup>.

The *Udāsī* literature spread to nearly three centuries portrayed the different aspects of the *Udāsī* ideology, its history, polity, religion, culture, and society. The earliest writers were more concerned with establishments of rules and regulation, beliefs and practices, required for the foundation and consolidation of their cult, which their works explicitly exhibited. The following century writers were more concerned about the custom, traditions, and formulating principles to be followed by the disciples so that a particular shape and constitution could be provided to it. The writers of the nineteenth century were disturbed by the establishment of the colonial rule and their writing clearly showed their hatredness for them. The twentieth century writers seemed to have been influenced by the growing national movement in the country. Their work, one way or the other relates to the up-liftment and enlightenment of the society as a whole. The *Udāsīs* exerted a profound effect on Indian society, when the Hindu masses were suffering because of ignorance and rigidity of cast distinctions. The philosophy preached by *Udāsīs* inspired them. In their writings they condemn those Sadhus and Sants who practiced false rituals and adopted superficial means to attract and mislead the innocent people by displaying false customs and rituals. Nigmanand Paramhans in his writings criticized those Sadhus who smeared ash on their body, and sat idle on the banks of river Ganga. Their main purpose was to seek public attention. Parmanand condemned such practices. Even a cursory look shows that the *Udāsī Sants* were not averse to the society and family system. Though they lived as ascetic but never preached this to the people.

Many poets were influenced by the spirit of Nationalism. In this regards names of Ganga Das, Brahmanand and Swami Nigmanand are worth mentioning.

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<sup>203</sup> William Moorcroft, and George Treback, *Travles In Himalyan Provinces Of Hindustan And The Punjab, In Ladakh And Kashmir, In Peshawar, Kabul, Kunduz And Bukhara* (1819 to 1825), Patiala, 1970,(reprint) first published in 1837, p 71.

<sup>204</sup> *Amritsar District Gazetteer*, 1992-93, pp. 42- 43.

Ganga Das openly criticized British administration and Nigmanad condemned actions of those men who diminish the feelings of Nationalism in society. The feeling of National consciousness social upliftment and desire to uplift the village society could be seen in the writings of Sri Chandra in 16<sup>th</sup> century.

These *Udāsī* poets were well versed in the art of sketching a vivid picture of nature. Nigmanand had beautifully described nature in his composition. Sant literature mentions various seasons and their impact on a common man and on the mind of a lover. Ganga Das had portrayed the picture of a lover in separation and beautifully describes his sufferings in his poetical exposition.

Some of the *Udāsī* poets were considerate towards women while some condemn them. Leaving aside a few *Padas* of Brahmanand and Gopal Das, generally the other *Udāsī* poets had presented her as beautiful, kind, and pious. Ganga Das considered the existence of woman important for the society. Many *Udāsī* poets ignored ‘*Shingar Ras*’ which magnified the beauty of women.

*Veer-ras* was very well defined in the writings of Sant Rein, Ganga Das and Nigmanand. In *Bairagi Veer* Nigmanand has liberally used *Veer Ras* to describe the chivalry of Bairagi Veer. Ganga Das and Karshne poet, Kavi Gopal Das have explained four aspects of *Veer Ras* i.e. bravery in war (*Yudh veerta*), charity (*Daan veerta*), Religion (*Dharm Veerta*) and piety (*Daya Veerta*).

Regarding *Adbhut Ras*, Sant literature expressed love through imaginative stories, repudiating miracles. *Krodh Bhav* (anger) and *Karun Ras* (mourning/*shok*) were rarely seen in their writings. *Hasya* (laughter) and *Bhayanak* (terrible) *Ras* were also missing in their work. The writings of the *Udāsī* poets were full of *Bhakti Ras*, and *Bhakti Bhav* or praise of God and nature.

Sant Rein and Ganga Das explicitly solicit their followers to articulate themselves in common dialect. Different writers wrote the *Udāsī* literature from different places and as such its script had multiple dimensions: Ganga Das wrote in Kuru Pradesh; Sant Rein, Lakshmi Bai and Das Raj wrote in Punjab; Gopal Das and other Karihine poets wrote from Mathura; Swami Brahmanand at Bundelkhand; Rattan Faujdar at Bombay and Swami Sharda Ram at Poona. As a result we come across the use of multilingual script, in the writings of Sant literature, such as *Sanskrit*, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujrati, *Braj*, Haryanvi, Bhojpuri etc. Laxmi Bai, Desh Raj Sachhidanand, Amir Das, Ishwar Das, Hariya Ji and Sant Rein’s writing is dominated by Punjabi language. The Punjabi poets i.e Jwala Prakash and Soham Muni Falahari

wrote from Rajasthan. As such their writings bear the dominance of Punjabi words. Baba Sri Chand, Gurdas and Kashi Ram used *Khari Boli*. The use of *Khari* in Hindi was in existence before the writing of Bhartendu. The first *Udāsī Sant* to use *Khari* was Shri Chand, followed by Ganga Das. Bharatendu made use of *Khari Boli* in 1881 A.D.

In the political sphere the contribution of the *Udāsī* poets is appreciable. Through their writings they inculcated the feeling of patriotism among the people. Many of them openly condemned British Administration for its corrupt and misrule through their literary works. They had emphasized that in ancient times the relation between the ruler and the ruled used to be of like father and son, which was missing during British rule. Their writings, presents the political picture of the times which give us much scope to study and understand the British administrative structure. They made public aware of their rights and on the other hand, in their writings they made the administration aware of their responsibilities towards the people, an uphill and daring task in those days. Many writers like Brahmanand had condemned the British Government for their misrule. Some *Udāsī Sants* even went to jail and participated in the freedom movement of the country. Brahmanand was perhaps the only *Udāsī Sant* who had participated in the India's freedom struggle along with Mahatma Gandhi. He led a simple life and was always ready to help others, protect mother-land and ready to sacrifice himself for the country. There were very few Sants who were inspired and influenced by patriotic feelings.

In the religious sphere their contribution is immense. They practice their faith through a network of disciplined organizations. They not only carried forward the message of Baba Sri Chand and other *Udāsī Sants* but also tried to spread the *Udāsī* sect far and wide within and outside the country. The numerous *Udāsī* establishments including *akharas*, *dharamalas*, *deras*, *samadhs*, *asthans*, *gurdwaras* and temples shows the extent of intense zeal and sincerity, the *Udāsī sadhs* have, to carry on their movement to the farthest corner of the earth they can.

In the social sphere the *Udāsī* poets pointed out draw backs of the existing social customs and practices in the society of that time which was full of evils. This goes to the credit of the *Udāsī Sants* that they in their writings have openly condemned caste system, false rituals, beliefs, practices, animal killing, the gap existing between rich and poor, and the illiteracy through their literary works. The study of the above writers brings to our notice the existence of the social evils such as

adultery, female infanticide, selling of women, illicit relations and depicting the plight of the women in the society. The eating habits had degenerated and meat eating and intoxicating drinks were condemned by the *Udāsī* poets. They loathed slaughter of animals, theft of religious scriptures, corn, cotton, fruits, corruption of the Pandits and idol worship. The caste system in the society had degenerated and the dominance of corrupt Brahmins was condemned and on the contrary the just and righteous Brahmins were praised and revered by the poets. The idol worship had become a common practice and worship of unlimited deities was observed ignoring the importance in the unity of God head. The *Udāsī* poets condemned caste system, caste pride, and disrespect shown to the Guru. Now the question is did they only criticize the social structure of that time or did they do any purposeful work to improve the society. The *Udāsī Sants* through their religious discourses not only condemned these evil practices but also tried to reform the society. They did many social works for the betterment of the society and such works like imparting of education in *pathshalas*, giving stipends to the poor students, giving food and shelter to the travelers and visitors, helping the people during natural calamities like flood and earth quake, managing dispensaries and distributing free medicine, to the poor still continues. One thing is to be kept in mind that all *Mahants* were not vocal to the existing social customs and traditions, but many did preach and practiced and tried to uplift the society.

#### IV

The major contributions of the *Udāsī* poets especially in the field of social evils need special consideration. Sant Rein's work, *Udāsī Bodh* is perhaps the earliest *Udāsī* work that deals with the social evils of his times. The society of the times was engulfed in many social evils, false beliefs, rituals, caste system and by the dominance of superfluous religious practices. The worship of unlimited deities had made religion expensive and beyond the reach of the common man. The female infanticide, adultery, selling of women and plight of widow had tainted the women's status in the society. The preachers of the religious literature were distorting the scripture for their personal gains. As a source for the contemporary socio-cultural history of the early nineteenth century Punjab, the *Udāsī* literature throws considerable light on the existing social customs and evil practices of the times. The eating habits had degenerated and meat eating and intoxicating drinks were condemned by the *Udāsī*



poets. They loathed the slaughter of animals, theft of religious scriptures, corn, cotton, fruits, corruption of the Pandits and idol worship. The caste system in the society had degenerated and the dominance of corrupt Brahmins was condemned, on the other hand, the just and righteous Brahmins were praised and revered by the poets. The idol worship had become a common practice and worship of unlimited deities was observed which ignored the importance of the unity of God.

## CHAPTER - VII

### THE GURDWARA REFORM MOVEMENT AND THE *UDĀSĪ MAHANTS*

*The Gurudwaras*<sup>1</sup> and *Dharamsalas* have played a vital role in shaping the history of the Sikhs and the development of the Sikh religious tradition. The *Guru*, the *Granth* and the *Gurdwara*, these religious structures have traditionally been the centres of the religious, social, cultural and political life of the Sikhs.<sup>2</sup> Guru Nanak established the institution of the *Sangat* and the *Pangat*. Wherever he went, he left behind a *Sangat* with an injunction to build *Dharamsala*<sup>3</sup> with the purpose of meeting in a common forum.<sup>4</sup> The institution of the *Sangat*<sup>5</sup> and the *Pangat* continued under the successors of Guru Nanak. The *Masands* and the *Sangats* became the central organisation of the Sikhs for the propagation work and collection of funds. By the time of Guru Gobind Singh's period the *Masands* developed into disruptive force and hence he abolished the institution of the *Masands*.

After the execution of Banda Bahadur in 1716, till the rise of the *Misaldars*, a period of terror and persecution followed by the orders of Emperor Bahadur Shah and Farrukhsiar, and their Punjab Governors Abdus Samad Khan, Zakariya Khan and Mir Mannu. The Sikhs also suffered during the Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasions from 1748 to 1767. The result was that when a large number of Sikhs, along with their Sikh preachers were forced into exile, the Sikh shrines passed into the control of the *Udāsī Mahants*.

Even after the Mughal rule, these shrines continued to be looked after by the *Udāsīs*, and the post of *Granthi*-cum-manager passed from father to son. The less important *Gurdwaras* were looked after by the men who wished to dedicate their life to the prayer and the service of the community. With the establishment of the British

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<sup>1</sup> Gurdwara, A Sikh Temple. Generally, The Place of Worship of the Sikhs.

<sup>2</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, Atlantic Publishers, New Delhi 1988, p. 1; Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Sikh Itihas Research Board, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, 1965, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> The first Sikh Temple was probably established by Nanak at Kartarpur after his return from his travels. It was then a simple *Dharmasala* (a place of worship), where his disciples gathered to listen to his discourses and to sing hymns. Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-2004, Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2007, New Delhi, p. 194.

<sup>4</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 9: throughout the British times the *Sangats* (congregation) were supposed to be the in-charge of the Gurdwaras.

rule new settlement records had to be made. In many of these, the lands and the properties attached to the *Gurdwaras* were entered against the names of the *Mahants*.<sup>6</sup>

## I

The *Udāsīs* in charge of the various *Gurdwaras* rendered important service to the Sikh religion by keeping the *Gurdwaras* going and were highly respected as men of high moral character and integrity. They were well versed in the Sikh scriptures and devoted themselves chiefly to reciting and expounding the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. In the earlier stages these *Mahants* enjoyed the confidence and reverence of *Sangats* of their areas. They also warned their *chelas* at the time of admission into their Order to avoid two deadly temptations gold and the women. These *Mahants* also nominated their successors to the *gaddis*. Their nominees were accepted by the *Sangats*. Both *Mahants* and their *chelas* enjoyed popular esteem and confidence. But this tradition of purity and austerity seems to have deteriorated as the result of the increase in their income derived from revenue free *jagirs* bestowed on most of the historic shrines by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and other Sikh *Misaldars*.<sup>7</sup> The *Mahants* became inherited masters of the sacred shrines, gave up all symptoms of Sikhism excepting the beard and the turban. Though the *Mahants* were known to be the managers and custodians, and not the owners of the *Gurdwaras*, the concerned officials tacitly encouraged them to seek the protection of the law which regarded them as owners. They adopted all sorts of corruption and vices. Idols were placed in various *Gurdwaras* and their worship was becoming common contrary to the principles of the Sikh gospel.<sup>8</sup>

The misappropriation of the religious funds and change in the life style of the custodian *Mahants* was being looked down upon by the Sikhs but lack of any social organisation prevented any move to turn them out. Early twentieth century saw the rise of provincial movements such as the *Nirankaris*, the *Namdharis*, and the Singh Sabha in conjunction with all India movements such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Dev Samaj and the Arya Samaj. Moreover, the increasing political consciousness and response to Nationalist upsurge through out the country also played a large part. It was the cumulative effect of these internal and external forces which created an

<sup>6</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, 1839-1988, pp. 194-95.

<sup>7</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, pp. 3-4.; also see, Mohinder Singh, "British Policy towards the Akali Movement", *Punjab Past and Present*, 1976, pp. 176-190.

<sup>8</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Sikh Itihas Research Board, SGPC Amritsar, 1965, p. 6; Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, pp. 18-19.

awakening among the people in the Punjab and also the desire among the Sikhs to reform the shrines.<sup>9</sup>

The persecution of the Kukas and the suppression of their movement saw the birth of the Singh Sabha. The Singh Sabha Amritsar was formed, in 1873 to check the Hindu propagation against the Sikh Gurus.<sup>10</sup> At Lahore, another Singh Sabha was formed in 1879. The main task of the Sabha was to spread literacy, education and religious awareness among the Sikhs.<sup>11</sup> In 1883, the Lahore and Amritsar Singh Sabhas were merged.<sup>12</sup> Both Singh Sabha and the Chief Khalsa Diwan promoted a modern sense of self consciousness and identity among the Sikhs. The Chief Khalsa Dewan founded in 1902 acted as coordinating body for the Singh Sabha Movement.<sup>13</sup> On the contrary the Chief Khalsa Dewan helped the British authorities.<sup>14</sup>

The Sikh masses looked forward to the Singh Sabha for the eradication of evils which had entered the historical Sikh Shrines under the control of *Pujaris* and *Sadhus*.<sup>15</sup> Singh Sabha passed many resolutions and made representations to the Government for the purification of the Sikh shrines but they did not succeed in their mission.<sup>16</sup>

The agrarian unrest of 1907 exploded the myth of the loyalty of the Punjabis and marked the beginning of mass political awakening in the province.<sup>17</sup> The revolutionary Ghadr propaganda made major headway in the Punjab during the First World War. Though the movement failed but it was able to make a major contribution towards the articulation of discontentment against the British rule by inspiring many people by their patriotic and revolutionary propaganda.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-2004, Oxford University Press, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), 2007, New Delhi, p.141 Also see Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 7.; for details about the Kuka Movement see.; <http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Namdhari>

<sup>11</sup> Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion, Politics in North India*, Vikas Publishing House Delhi, 1975, p. 309.

<sup>12</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-2004, Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2007, New Delhi, p.143, But the association had proved a failure.

<sup>13</sup> Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion, Politics in North India*, p. 309. Also see; [http:// en.Wikipedia .org/wiki/Singh\\_Sabha\\_Movement](http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Singh_Sabha_Movement).

<sup>14</sup> SC Mittal, *Freedom Movement in Punjab (1905-29)*, Concept Publishing Company Delhi, 1977, p.139. for details see ; <http://www.chiefkhalasadiwan.com/history.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 9, 'the writer mentions the Mahants as *Pujaris* and *Sadhus* signifying their commonality to the Hindus rather than the Sikhs'.

<sup>16</sup> Davinder Singh, *Akali Politics in Punjab (1964-85)*, National Book Organisation, New Delhi, 1993, p. 30.

<sup>17</sup> The agrarian unrest of 1907 was the first instance in the Punjab, in which the rural classes, especially the *jat* Sikh peasantry in the canal colonies, gave expression to their discontent against the policies of the British Government.

<sup>18</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-1988, p. 183.

Initiative for the reform was taken by the Sikh and the pro-Sikh news papers as early as 1905, when some of the news papers like the *Khalsa Advocate*, the *Khalsa Samachar*, the *Khalsa Sewak* and *The Punjab*, began complaining about the management of the Golden Temple, Amritsar and other important Sikh Shrines. These papers expressed grief and pain at the *Gurdwaras* and other trust holdings being converted into private properties of the *Mahants* and also other abuses prevailing in the system of management. *The Punjab* reminded the *Mahants* that 'The *Gurdwaras* belong to the Sikh community and not the priests, who are mere servants of the *Panth*'.<sup>19</sup>

In 1906, under pressure from the Singh Sabhas and the Sikh press, the Chief Khalsa Diwan passed a resolution asking the government that the rules governing the management of the Golden Temple be so changed as to allow the *Panth* the right to appoint its manager and other officials but it went without any success. After having failed at the resolutions and petitions, some Sikhs of advanced political opinions decided to boycott the temples, to exert greater public pressure on the *Mahants* and even litigations were tried to get the *Gurdwaras* vacated but to no success.<sup>20</sup>

The resentment of the Sikhs against the British attitude was growing but it could not be channelised. The opportunity came in January 14, 1914 when the British Indian Government demolished the wall of *Gurdwara Rakabganj* Delhi to the ground on the pretext of making the road run straight.<sup>21</sup> Singh Sabha launched protest to the Government. At that time the British Government had entered War and the Sikhs formed considerable proportion of the British Indian army. The Government could not afford to disregard the Sikh sentiments at that time as such the wall of the garden was restored but the *Gurdwara* wall remained in the same condition. The Singh Sabha leaders gave up the agitation due to their cooperation to the Government during the War. After the War was over, the matter of *Gurdwara Rakabganj* again got prominence. Sikhs who had helped wholeheartedly to the British Government in the War wanted the restoration of the *Gurdwara* wall. But British Government did not pay any respect to the sentiments of the Sikhs. The Singh Sabha leaders decided to

<sup>19</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> The courts of law were slow in giving justice and *Akalis* were not ready to wait that long.

<sup>21</sup> Gaini Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar*, Singh Brothers, Mai Sewan, Amritsar, 1951, PP29-31; also see, Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 58; [http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Gurdwara\\_Rakab\\_Ganj\\_Sahib](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Gurdwara_Rakab_Ganj_Sahib); <http://www.reading-gurdwara.org.uk/sikhism/historical.html>

send *Shahidi Jatha*<sup>22</sup> to Delhi to rebuild the demolished wall. Thus, realizing the seriousness of the situation the Government through Maharaja Ripu Daman of Nabha, arranged for the reconstruction of the wall.<sup>23</sup> This was a great success on the part of the Singh Sabha. The Singh Sabha realizing the importance of *Shahidi Jathas*, adopted same technique and method to further launch an agitation to free the *Gurdwaras* from the clutches of the corrupt *Mahants*.

The demolition of the wall of *Gurdwara Rakabganj*, Delhi, the tragedy of Budge-Budge, the demobilization of the Sikh soldiers after the War and the unsatisfactory treatment meted out to them during the War, further added to the discontent created by the Ghadrites propaganda. Several other factors contributed to the aggravation of political unrest like failure of summer monsoon, poor *rabi* harvest, the cost of living rose higher than ever before. Also there was imposition of special tax on urban population. Last of all came the influenza epidemic.<sup>24</sup>

On the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November 1920, a mass meeting of Nationalist Sikhs was held where the committee of a 175 members was formed. Its main object was to manage, reform and control the Sikh shrines and *Gurdwaras*. It soon came to be known as Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.<sup>25</sup> The committee was given the task of the management of the *Gurdwaras* through its military wing i.e Shiromani Akali Dal and to launch militant agitation through its Akalis *Jathas* to free the *Gurdwaras* from the clutches of corrupt, and Hinduised *Mahants*.<sup>26</sup>

The reform of the *Gurdwaras* frequently meant removal of Hinduized priests and Hindu influences, including Hindu idols, from the precincts of Sikh shrines. Some Hindus in the Punjab naturally resented these aspects of the reform movement. Though outwardly the British Government adopted the neutral policy but actually encouraged the *Mahants* to adopt stiffer attitude towards the Akali reformers and

<sup>22</sup> *Shahidi Jatha*- a group of Sikh martyrs.

<sup>23</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Sikh Itihas Research Board, p. 58-59.

<sup>24</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p.12.

<sup>25</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, RC Publishers Delhi, 1977, p.46-47, Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-2004, Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2007, New Delhi, p. 198; Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Shiromani Akali Dal came into existence with four objectives; (1) to bring the Sikh religious places under Panthak control and management, (2) to do away with the permanent position of the *Mahants*, thus, ending their irresponsibility (3) to utilize the property and income of the *Gurdwaras* for the purpose of which they were founded (4) to practice the Sikh religion according to the teachings of the Sikh Gurus as preserved in the *Adi-Granth*.

<sup>26</sup> Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion, Politics in North India*, p. 283, 84, 311, 312. Also see ; Vinod Kumar, *Akali Politics in the Punjab* p. 31 ;[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Shiromani\\_Gurdwara\\_Prabandhak\\_Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiromani_Gurdwara_Prabandhak_Committee).

supported them by declaring “any person who attempts to forcibly oust any *Mahant* ... is liable to punishment under the law”.<sup>27</sup>

The Gurdwara Reform Movement is significant in three respects (1) it created a sense of confidence among the Indians that the British could be forced to meet their genuine demands through non-violent mass movement; (2) it brought the Akali Dal and the Congress leadership very close to each other, giving a great impetus to the freedom movement in Punjab; (3) the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal provided the institutional and organizational structure to respond to the aspirations of the newly mobilized Sikh masses, and in the process it acted as the training ground for the emerging Sikh leadership.<sup>28</sup>

In the course of their five year (1920-25) struggle the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal were not only able to oust the *Mahants* rather obtained the control over all the important Sikh shrines through peaceful agitation and passive sufferings, but also to strengthen the forces of nationalism in the Punjab by ejecting the *Mahants*, the government appointed managers and other vested interests in the Sikh communities. Once the important Sikh shrines came under the Akali control, the *Mahants* in charge of the smaller *Gurdwaras* either voluntarily submitted to the authority of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee or were made to surrender their shrines and the *jagirs* attached to them under the provisions of the Sikh *Gurdwaras* and Shrines Bill passed in July 1925.<sup>29</sup>

## II

In the Charitable and Religious Endowment Act (Act XIV of 1920)<sup>30</sup> some rights were given to the beneficiaries in the control and management of temples. Therefore the Sikh reformers, in the beginning, went to the courts of law in the hope to obtain

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<sup>27</sup> Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion, Politics in North India*, p. 283, 84, 311, 312, A letter in file no. 179-II/1922.

<sup>28</sup> Davinder Singh, *Akali Politics in Punjab (1964-85)*, p. 30; [http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Gurdwara\\_Reform\\_Movement](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Gurdwara_Reform_Movement).

<sup>29</sup> Mohinder Singh Opines that over three hundred large and small *Gurdwaras* were liberated by the Akalis: Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 19, 20. Also see, Wali Ullah Khan, , *Sikh Shrines in west Pakistan*, Govt. of Pakistan, Lahore, 1962; Gurmukh Singh, (Major), *Historical Sikh Shrines*, Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1995; S.S. Johar, *The Sikh Gurus and their Shrines*, Delhi, 1976; Mehar Singh, *Sikh Shrines in India*, Govt. Of India, New Delhi, 1975; Iqbal Qaisar, *Historical Sikh Shrines in Pakistan*, Punjabi History Board, Lahore, 1998.

<sup>30</sup> The Charitable and Religious Trusts Act (Act XIV of 1920) quoted in Mukherjee's Hindu Law of Religious and Charitable Trusts, see Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 18.

popular control of their sacred places. Here too disappointment was in store for them. The courts could not help the reformers because of the law, as it stood then, made it obligatory on the part of two or more beneficiaries of a temple to join hands to go to the Deputy Commissioner for permission to sue the *Mahants* guilty of misappropriation of funds. The Deputy Commissioner, being a support or of the vested interests, used his discretion to deny the necessary permission in most of the cases. In other cases where the reformers succeeded in obtaining the required permission, the cases could not be followed up for want of exorbitant court fees prescribed by the judicial machinery.<sup>31</sup>

Being convinced of the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of the legal remedies for reforms, the reformers now organised themselves in the form of local Akali *Jathas*. The decisive period in the growth of a modern, militant Sikh identity and the institutionalization of Sikh consciousness came during the Gurdwara Reform Movement. The Sikhs launched agitations at the sights of important Sikh shrines in order to free them from the control of allegedly corrupt and Hinduised *Mahants*.

*Mahant* Harnam Singh of *Gurdwara Babe-di-Ber*, Sialkot<sup>32</sup> died and his minor son *Mahant* Gurcharan Singh was appointed successor under guardianship of a non-Sikh named Ganda Singh, an honorary Magistrate<sup>33</sup>. It led to resentment among the Singh Sabha and the Sikhs throughout the Punjab. The reformers reacted by filing a civil suit but were ordered by the district judge to pay court fee of rupee 50,000. The reformers failed to pay 50,000 as court fee to file civil suit, thus, resorted to agitation. Ganda Singh placed many hurdles but reformers got control of the shrine by the end of September-October 1920<sup>34</sup>. On October 5, 1920 the Sikhs had a big *Dewan* and elected permanent Committee of 13 members for the control of *Gurdwara Babe-di-Ber* Sahib.<sup>35</sup>

The corrupt and non-Sikh practices in the precincts of the Golden Temple and the *Akal Takht* at Amritsar and official control over its management had been a source of great discontentment among the Sikhs long before the beginning of the movement

<sup>31</sup> The cases of Gurdwara Babe-di-Ber, Sialkot and Panja Sahib could not be perused for want of court fees of Rs. 50,000 in the case of former and Rs. 5,000 in the case of the latter. Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Lehar*, p. 85.

<sup>32</sup> The Gurdwara, was built in the memory of *Guru Nanak's* visit to that place, came to be popularly known as Bae-di-ber because the *Guru* sat under a *Ber* tree there.

<sup>33</sup> Gaini Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar*, pp. 83-87; Sohan Singh Josh, *Alkali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 29-39.

<sup>34</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 39.

<sup>35</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 20.



for reform. The *Mahants* of the Golden temple and the British Deputy Commissioner were hand in glove and were ignoring the sentiments and opinion of the Sikh masses. 'The government *Sarbrah* having kept the appointing authority appeased, spent his time in appropriating the huge wealth of the shrine, and consequently, neglected his daily religious duties. Costly gifts to the temple slowly found their way to the homes of the *Sarbrah* and other priests.<sup>36</sup>

The precincts were used by *Pandits* and Astrologers. The idols were openly worshipped in the *Gurudwara*. According to contemporary accounts, on *Basant* and *Holi* festivals, the whole place degenerated into a rendezvous for the local rogues, thieves and other bad characters. Pornographic literature was freely sold, and brothels were opened in the neighbouring houses.<sup>37</sup>

The agitation against the Golden Temple affair had started way back in 1906 when a meeting of the Sikh Youth on 22 December 1906 passed a resolution asking the Government to hand over the control of Darbar Sahib to the Chief Khalsa Dewan. Similar resolutions were passed in the other parts of the Punjab also.<sup>38</sup> The Central Sikh League in a meeting held at Amritsar in 1920 again referred to the long standing grievances of the Sikhs connected with the Golden Temple. The demand for the control and management of the Sikh holy shrine Golden Temple was made in the Punjab Legislative Council and Government was requested to make the accounts public. But the movement could not make any headway. It got impetus after the formation of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee in 1920.<sup>39</sup> Sardar Arur Singh *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple appeared before the Diwan, begged for forgiveness and announced his resignation.

The Golden Temple and the adjoining *Gurdwaras* had passed into the control of the Akalis in October 1920. Though Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee and the Committee appointed by it, controlled the affairs of the Golden Temple but the fact that the keys of *Tosha Khana* were in the hands of Sunder Singh Ramgarhia gave feeling of Government control over the *Gurdwaras*. Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, being suspicious of bonfides of Baba Kharak Singh, the President of the

<sup>36</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 22.

<sup>37</sup> Gaini Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar*, pp.73-77,130-151; Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 36, 40,41.

<sup>38</sup> *Khalsa Advocate*, May-June 1906; *The Punjab*, May 1906 cited in Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> Punjab Legislative Council Proceedings, March 13, 1920, cited in Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 22.

Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee, took keys of the Tosha (treasury) Khana and gave it to his nominee or *Sarbrah*.<sup>40</sup> Akalis demanded the keys<sup>41</sup> to be returned to Kharak Singh, the president of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee. In a meeting held on October 29, 1921, the executive Committee of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee had asked Sunder Singh Ramgarhia, the Government appointed manager, to hand over the keys to Kharak Singh. The Akalis were disturbed when they discovered that Deputy Commissioner Amritsar had sent Lala Amarnath an extra Assistant Commissioner with a Police party to Ramgarhia's house to collect the keys of *Toshakhana*. Protests were carried out by Akalis which resulted in arrest of 193 leading Akalis.<sup>42</sup> Government finally had to give into the Akalis and all arrested were released unconditionally. The Akalis got total control over *Gurdwara*. Mahatma Gandhi sent a telegram to the new President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee, 'First Battle for India's Freedom Won. Congratulations.'<sup>43</sup> The British Officer, a District Judge himself arrived at a *Dewan* held at Akal Takht and handed over the keys of *Tosha Khana* to Sardar Kharak Singh, President Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee in October 1921.<sup>44</sup>

The Akali victory at Amritsar with the formation of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee and the Shiromani Akali Dal encouraged the local *Jathas* of the reformers. A *Jatha* of 25 Akalis was dispatched from Amritsar under the leadership of Bhai Kartar Singh *Jhabbar*. It reached *Panja Sahib* on November 18, 1920. The next day the supporters of *Mahants* had clashed with Akalis. Jathedar Kartar Singh *Jhabbar* took possession of the cash box containing the daily offerings and declared the *Mahant* a *tankhahia*, who was not to be allowed to enter the shrine till he went to the Akal Takht to beg pardon for his acts. Thus Panja Sahib *Gurdwara* passed into the control of the reformers and a representative management committee was soon formed to look after it.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-1988, p.201.

<sup>41</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 112-115.; Ganda Singh (ed.), *Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement*, Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, 1965, 179.

<sup>42</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 69 & 220 'gives the number of the arrested leaders to be 198 while Khushwant Singh mentions 193 in , *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-1988, p. 202. Also see, Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 46.

<sup>43</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-1988, p. 202; Also see, Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 48-50.

<sup>44</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 132-33.

<sup>45</sup> Gaini Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, PP.104-105; Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 24-25. Also see.; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gurdwara\\_Panja\\_Sahib](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gurdwara_Panja_Sahib)

The *Akali* occupation of other *Gurdwaras* of lesser historical significance including Chomala Sahib Lahore, Tham Sahib in village Jhambr Kalan of Lahore district, Khara Sauda and Kar Sahib<sup>46</sup> at Nankana, Chola Sahib at Ludhiana District, *Gurdwara* at Shekhupur and Khadur Sahib in Amritsar and Anandpur Sahib<sup>47</sup> soon followed. *Mahants* of most of these shrines on their own swore allegiance to the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee and agreed to serve under it. Others were compelled to do so when the cases pending in the courts had been decided in the favour of the Akalis.<sup>48</sup>

The Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht had come under the control of the Sikhs without bloodshed, but at Tarn Taran, and fort-night later, at Nankana Sahib, the birth place of *Guru Nanak Dev*, the *Mahants* supported by the British authorities unleashed a violent attack upon hundreds of non-violent Akalai volunteers. Later the events at *Guru ka Bagh* and *Jaito* were even more tragic. The courage and the perseverance of the *Akali* volunteers forced the Government to pass the *Gurdwara* Act in 1925 and to release all *Akali* prisoners. The Sikhs in spite of provocations remained peaceful. The principle of non-violent Satyagrah was put to test on a mass scale with great success and this had a significant bearing on subsequent developments in Sikh politics in particular, and in the National Movement in general. Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the Sikh masses and their leaders for achieving success through non-violence.<sup>49</sup>

The Darbar Sahib Tarn Taran was founded by *Guru Arjun Dev* in 1500 AD and was famous for leper curing. It is situated within 15 kms of the city of Amritsar and had been under the same management as that of the Golden Temple and Akal Takht. During the days of Arur Singh, *Mahants* of Tarn Taran became more or less independent and introduced many evil practices within the precincts of *Gurdwara*.<sup>50</sup> After the sanctity of *Gurdwara* at Amritsar had been restored those at Tarn Taran naturally attracted the attention of the *Akali* reformers. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid,<sup>51</sup> a local leader of the reform movement is said to have invited the attention of the *Mahants* to the evils prevalent in the system of management and respectfully asked

<sup>46</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 219-21.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, p. 228-29.

<sup>48</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 24-25.

<sup>49</sup> Davinder Singh, *Akali Politics in Punjab (1964-85)*, National Book Organisation, New Delhi, 1993, p.31.

<sup>50</sup> Gains Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar*, pp. 106-111; Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 36, 54, 55.; for details of the Gurdwara see.; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarn\\_Taran\\_Sahib](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarn_Taran_Sahib).

<sup>51</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 55.

them to improve their ways. Sardar Lachhman Singh is also said to have made a similar plea. Sardar Lachhman Singh and the girls of his school were not allowed to enter the *Gurdwara* to recite *shabads* at *Gurdwara*.

When a local *Jatha* advised the *Mahants* to arrange for the recitation of *Asa di war* January 11, 1921, the *Mahants* are said to have beaten up the members of the *Jatha* with *lathis*.<sup>52</sup> In general meeting at Akal Takht<sup>53</sup> on January 24, 1921, the Akalis decided to march towards the Tarntaran to purify the place. On January 26, 1921 about 40 Akalis under the leadership of Teja Singh Bhhuchar reached there. The priest whose number is estimated to be 70, tried to provoke the Akalis but the clash was avoided a compromise was reached. The priest agreed to the formation of a joint committee to settle the dispute, which was a trick to prepare for an attack. At the same night the drunken priest around 9 pm attacked the peaceful and unsuspecting Akalis. Some members of the *Jatha* who were inside the *Gurdwara* were seriously wounded. The priests used *lathis* and daggers and brick-bats. The holy place was soon smeared with blood of the wounded *Akali* volunteers. Bhai Hazara Singh and Hukum Singh succumbed to their injuries. On receiving this news the district Magistrate, and the Superintendent of Police and other officials rushed to the place to meet the leaders of both the parties. On finding that Akalis were not to be blamed they expressed their sympathies for them by an official order the priests were barred from entering the *Gurdwara* until the matter was decided by the Prabandhak Committee. The *Gurdwara* having thus come into the hands of the reformers, a provincial committee of management was formed, pending the appointment of a regular committee by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee.<sup>54</sup> From TarnTaran a *Jatha* proceeded to Naurangabad and purified the shrine.<sup>55</sup>

Nankana<sup>56</sup>, the birth place of *Guru* Nanak was most richly endowed Sikh shrine. After the death of *Mahant* Sadhu Ram, Narain Das managed the *Janam*

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<sup>52</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 26.

<sup>53</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 54-55, A lady 'In this meeting at Akal Takht had narrated the sorrow affair of the Tarn Taran Gurdwara where she along with her daughter had been molested. This hastened the decision of the assembly to take quick action against the *Pujaris* and *Mahants* of Tarntaran'.

<sup>54</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, , pp. 56-57.

<sup>55</sup> *Loc. Cit.*

<sup>56</sup> Apart from the Gurdwara of *Janam Asthan* where *Guru* Nanak was born, there are over half a dozen other shrines connected with different events connected with early life of the *Guru* like; *Bal Lila*, where *Guru* Nanak used to play during his childhood; *Kiara Sahib*, where the *Guru* made up the loss of a farmer whose field were spoilt by the *Guru's* buffalos; *Mal sahib*, where a snake is said to have spread its hood to protect the *Guru* from the sun; *Khara Sauda*, where *Guru* made a

*Asthan*. Narain Das lived in the *Gurdwara* with a mistress and was known to have invited prostitutes to dance in the sacred premises<sup>57</sup>. Though Sikhs wanted to eject him forcefully but the *Mahant* had the backing of local officials. Various Singh Sabhas had passed resolutions requesting the Government against the *Mahant*. The *Akali* reformers had made similar requests to *Mahant* Narain Das for reform. Narain Das on his own had sought Government assurance through Mr. CM King, the Commissioner of Lahore Division. A meeting of over 60 *Mahants* was held at Nankana Sahib and it was decided not to recognize the newly formed Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee. Rather a new Committee was formed with Narain Das as President and *Mahant* Basant Das as its Secretary. They also started Sant Sewak news paper from Lahore<sup>58</sup>. Fearing the fate of his *Gurdwara*, he made elaborate defense preparations, fortified *Nankana* and sought police protection along with his personal security guards. The act of *Mahant* was justified by the Mr. CM King, the Commissioner of Lahore Division.

On January 24, 1921 the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee decided to hold a Dewan at *Nankana* from March 4 to 6, 1921. *Mahant* Narain Das tried to placate the Akalis by showing his desire for a compromise.<sup>59</sup> He did not attend meeting at *Sachha Sauda*, Sultanpur called by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee.<sup>60</sup> Bhai Lachhman Singh left for *Nankana Sahib* February 19, 1921 and on February 20, 1921. Akalis led by Lachhman Singh Dharowalia<sup>61</sup> entered the *Gurdwara*. The gates of the shrines were closed and the *thugs* of Narain Das attacked the non-violent and bare handed *jatha* with swords and hatchets and fire arms. The dead and dying Akalis were dragged to a pile of logs which had been collected earlier

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good bargain by feasting the hungry Sadhus and *Patti Sahib* where the *Guru* wrote his first lesson on a wooden slate. Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, Fn -53, p. 28. Also see, Giani Gian Singh, *Gurdham Sangreh*, (Rare Book Section, No.929), Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1919; Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, (Rare Book Section, no. 1288), Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1923; Pandit Tara Singh, *Sri Guru Tirath Sangrah*, Temple Press, Ambala, 1984; [http://www.sikhcybermuseum.org.uk/history/Nankana Massacre 1920.htm](http://www.sikhcybermuseum.org.uk/history/Nankana%20Massacre1920.htm).

<sup>57</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 58-59; Ganda Singh (ed.), Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement, p. 179. Also see, Ganda Singh (ed.), *Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement*, p. 179.

<sup>58</sup> Gaini Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar*, pp 112-129; Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 29-30.

<sup>59</sup> Actually he was gaining time to make further preparations as he wanted to teach SGPC a lesson to remember.

<sup>60</sup> *Akali* meeting to be held at *Sachha Sauda*, Sultanpur from February 7 to 9, 1921. and another meeting was to be held at Shekhupura February 15, 1921.

<sup>61</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 58-59.

and burnt. By the time the police and the locals came to the scene 130 men had been consumed by the flames<sup>62</sup>. *Gurdwara* was taken over by the army.<sup>63</sup> Jathedar Jhhabbar along with his 2200 Akali *Jatha* marched towards Nankana to take possession of *Gurdwara*. He was warned at Khipwala through orders of Deputy Commissioner Lahore, Mr. Currie.<sup>64</sup> Ignoring the warning they reached *Janam Asthan* and took control of the *Gurdwara*.<sup>65</sup> Now Deputy Commissioner of Lahore consulted Commissioner of Lahore and handed over the keys to the representatives of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. After the arrest of Narain Das *Mahants* of more than half a dozen, other local *Gurdwaras*, felt utterly demoralized and surrendered their shrines to Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee.<sup>66</sup> In spite of a strong criticism of their action of the local officials and their responsibility for the tragedy, neither Viceroy of India nor any other member of Executive Council asked the Government of Punjab to take any action against the concerned officials. This shows that officials wanted the growing movement of Akalis to be crushed through *Mahants* and thus to save themselves from incurring the displeasure of the Sikh community.<sup>67</sup>

Guru ka Bagh, a small shrine 13 miles away from Amritsar had been erected to commemorate the visit of *Guru Arjun*. Adjacent to the shrine was a plot of land on which acacia (Kikar tree) trees were planted to provide firewood for *Guru ka langar*<sup>68</sup>. The *Udasi Mahant* Sunder Das<sup>69</sup> accepted baptism and submitted himself to the authority of an elected committee of management consisting of 11 members appointed by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee. Suddenly, in the first week of August 1921 he lodged a complaint that the Akalis were cutting timber from the *Gurdwara* land. Police arrested the Akalis and charged them with criminal trespass. Akalis held a meeting at *Guru ka Bagh* where police dispersed them and arrested leaders, including Mehtab Singh and Master Tara Singh.<sup>70</sup> The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee took the challenge and *Jathas* of 100 Akalis each were

<sup>62</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-1988, p. 199.

<sup>63</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 78.

<sup>64</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 74.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, p. 74-75.

<sup>66</sup> Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p. 36.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, p. 41-42.

<sup>68</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 106.

<sup>69</sup> Gaini Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar* pp.156-164 ;Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 156-58; Also see, Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Struggle, Retrospect*, p.52.

<sup>70</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p.157-58.

formed, which proceeded towards *Guru ka Bagh*. For 19 days the encounter between the police and passive resisters continued.<sup>71</sup> 5,605 Akalis had been arrested, and 936 were hospitalized. The Akalis took possession of *Guru ka Bagh* along with the disputed land. It was the second decisive battle won'.<sup>72</sup> With a sense of triumph Akalis arranged the cleansing of tank or *kar seva* of Golden Temple in summer of 1922. The work of cleansing lasted for 22 days and terminated on July 8, 1922<sup>73</sup>. A government report on March 1923 said that 'Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee has already captured 125 *Gurdwaras*'.<sup>74</sup> February 17, 1923 the historic shrine of Muktsar was taken over by the Akalis and on February 19, 1923, they got hold on *Bungas* and *langar* and broke the locks of *Gurdwaras*.<sup>75</sup>

Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha who ascended the throne on 20 December 1911, was made to abdicate in favour of his minor son, Partap Singh, on 9 July 1923<sup>76</sup>. the Maharaja of Nabha's dispute was with Maharaja of Patiala and not with the Government of India. Maharaja had great sympathy with the aware of his sympathies with the nationalist and Akali Movements. So he was persuaded to abdicate in favour of his minor son by his self seeking officials and the Political Agent to the Governor-General<sup>77</sup>. The Akali leaders assured their help to Maharaja<sup>78</sup>.

Assured of help from Akali leaders and his own liberal allowances<sup>79</sup>, the Maharaja also won over the editors of some of the Pro-Akali Papers, among them *Sachha Dhandora*, *Daler-i-hind*, *Bir Akali*; and *Kirpan Bahadur*.<sup>80</sup> The Native Press projected Maharaja as a Nationalist Prince; an orthodox self-respecting Sikh ruler' and 'religious leader of the Sikh community'<sup>81</sup> and Maharaja was able to win the good will and support of the majority of the Sikh community

<sup>71</sup> Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 1839-1988, p. 204.

<sup>72</sup> *Loc. Cit.*

<sup>73</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, pp.100, 102.

<sup>74</sup> File 25/1923 March cited in Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p.228.

<sup>75</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, p. 228.; [http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Battle\\_of\\_Muktsar](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Battle_of_Muktsar).

<sup>76</sup> Note dated 29 January 1924 in File No. 628-3-P/1924, Foreign Political, N.A-I, as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p. 67; Ruchi Ram Sahni, p. 197.

<sup>77</sup> Letter dated 14 Dec. 1923 from his Highness the maharaja of Nabha to His Excellency Lord Reading, the victory of India, file no-18 (Nabha Records), Punjab State Achieves Patiala, as quoted in Mohinder Singh p. 67.

<sup>78</sup> Ripudaman Singh undated letter to the S.G.P.C. confidential papers, p; 173 *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>79</sup> Caveesher Papers in Nehru Memorial Library: *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>80</sup> Statement of S.A Dighe in the files of the History of Freedom Movement in the Punjab, Patiala: *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>81</sup> See for details Native Press Abstracts, (Punjab) June 1923 to March 1924, particularly *Akali-te-Pardesi*, *Kirpan Bahadur*, *Bande Matram*. *The Tribune* in the N.A.I. and also cuttings from the

As the news of the abdication of the Maharaja and his removal to Dehra Dun was made public, the Pro-Akali news papers strongly reacted and declared that the statements issued by Government were false and deceptive<sup>82</sup> which were obtained as a result of farcical display of chargesheets<sup>83</sup> and that the valuables of Maharaja's family were forcibly taken away.<sup>84</sup> Leaders of Indian National Congress argued that Maharaja was 'deposed not for his short comings but for his virtues'<sup>85</sup>. The Shiromani Akali Dal passed formal resolutions urging the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee to raise a typhoon of agitation till the Maharaja was restored<sup>86</sup>.

The Akali leadership formally took up the question of the restoration of the Maharaja by issuing a communiqué on 9 July 1923<sup>87</sup>. 29 July was fixed as a day of Prayer and 9 Sept. 1923, the day for barefooted Protest March. The *Sangat* was also urged to Pass resolution against the action of Government and Politics agent<sup>88</sup> another communiqué issued on 10 July 1923, it was stated that the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee had very good reasons to believe that the abdication of the Maharaja was not voluntary but had been exhorted by official pressure; that the weakening of the Nabha was the thin end of the wedge against an important section of the Sikh Community<sup>89</sup>. Diwans were held in different parts of Nabha. One such Diwan was organized at Jaito on 25 August 1923. On the third day-27 August – certain resolutions were passed<sup>90</sup>. Under the order of Gurdial Singh, the Assistant Administrator, the State police arrested the organizers –Inder Singh and other Akalis on charges of delivering 'political speeches'<sup>91</sup>. The incident offered the Akalis a challenge and the Diwan, which was originally fixed – for three days and was to disperse on 27 August 1923 was extended indefinitely<sup>92</sup>.

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papers like *Sachha Dhandora*, *Daler-i-Hind*, *Bir Akali* and *Qaumi Dard*, etc., in the personal collection of Dr. Gandha Singh, Patiala.

<sup>82</sup> The *Akali*, 13 August 1923 also Kirpan Bahadur, Qaumi Dard and the *Bir Akali* (from a file of newspaper cuttings, Punjab State Achieves), as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p.69.

<sup>83</sup> *The Nation*, 15 August 1923: *Ibid*, p. 69.

<sup>84</sup> *The Kesri*, August 1923: *Ibid*, P. 70.

<sup>85</sup> Proceedings of the Cocanada Session: *Ibid*, p. 70.

<sup>86</sup> Shiromani Akali Dal Resolutions quoted in File no. 628-3, p., Foreign-Political/1924, N.A.I: *Ibid*, p. 72 & 73.

<sup>87</sup> Press Communiqué no. 5,9 July 1923 issued by S.G.P.C. Amritsar.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*.: No's 5,7,12 dated 9<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1923; Also see, The Civil and Military Gazette, 12 Sept. 1923: as quoted in Mohinder Singh, p. 71.

<sup>89</sup> Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Communiqué 10 July 1923 quoted in File No. 623-3-P: as quoted in Mohinder Singh, p.72.

<sup>90</sup> File No.28 (Nabha Records) P.S.A. Patiala : *Ibid*, p. 73.

<sup>91</sup> D.O Letter dated 7 September 1923 from Wilson Johnson to C.A.H, Townsend, Chief Secretary, Punjab, File No. 628-3-P, foreign-Political, N.A.I; as quoted in Mohinder Singh, p. 73.

<sup>92</sup> File No. 70 (Nabha Records) at P.S.A Patiala as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p. 73.



The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee passed a resolution to observe 9 September 1923<sup>93</sup> as Nabha Day. The Sikhs of Nabha organized a non-stop recitation of the *Granth* in their *Gurdwaras*. Such ceremonial was held at the temple at Gangsar in Village Jaito. It was interrupted by the Nabha Police, in their bid to arrest the Akalis, including the one reading the holy *Granth*.

Daily *Jathas* were sent to Jaito from Akal Takhat at Amritsar. In the beginning *Jathas* of 25 members daily walked to jaito after taking Pledge before Akal Takhat<sup>94</sup>. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal were declared illegal<sup>95</sup>, and 59 Akali leaders were arrested. Now the sizes of *Jathas* going to Jaito increased from Twenty five each to a hundred and then from one hundred to five hundred. Indian National Congress had full sympathy with the *morchas*. Among those arrested at Jaito was Jawahar Lal Nehru.<sup>96</sup>

While Jaito (Nabha) *Morcha* was going on, a second front was opened at Bhai Pheru in Lahore, where the *Mahant* had resiled from an earlier agreement with the Akalis and charged them for trespass. Batches of 25 Akalis began to present themselves for arrest everyday at Bhai Pheru<sup>97</sup>.

The unending stream of Passive resisters that continued to arrive at Jaito and Bhai Pheru exasperated the government, and it made a desperate bid to smash the movement. In first week of January 1924, Amritsar Police raided Akal Takhat, seized documents of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and arrested another 62 men. The English administrator ordered the confiscation of properties of Akalis in the state, restricted many thousands to their villages, and authorized use of greater violence against *Jathas* Coming to Jaito. On Feb 21, 1924<sup>98</sup> one such *jatha* of 500 Akalis arrived at Jaito and on its refusal to disperse was fired<sup>99</sup> on by the state police resulting in considerable loss of life. Second *Shahidi Jatha* started on 28 Feb. 1924.

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<sup>93</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, p. 206.

<sup>94</sup> S.G.P.C, Communiqué No. 94, undated as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p. 173.

<sup>95</sup> Order No. 23772 (Home Judicial) Quoted from File No-28 (Nabha Records) P.S.A. Patiala as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p.75

<sup>96</sup> Khushwant Singh, Vol. 2, 1839-1988, p. 209. Pro-Akali Newspapers put the number of dead and wounded over 500, SGPC communique reported over 300 casualties, including 70 to 150 dead. The official reports and report of judicial Magistrate who conducted enquiry was 19 dead and 28 wounded: *H/P File No. 180/1924*; Mohinder Singh, p. 73.

<sup>97</sup> Khushwant Singh, Vol. 2, 1839-1888, p. 209; [http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Jaito\\_Morcha](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Jaito_Morcha); S.G.P.C, Communiqué No. 94, undated/.

<sup>98</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, p. 224-225; Khushwant Singh, Vol-2, 1839-1988, p. 210.

<sup>99</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, p. 225.

Third *Shahidi Jatha* started on March 22, fourth *Shahidi Jatha* on March 27 and fifth *Shahidi Jatha* on 12 April 1924<sup>100</sup>. Government tried to isolate Akalis by giving wide publicity to the story that the Akalis wished to restore Sikh rule in the Punjab. Negotiations were started between the Akali leadership and the British Officials for a solution to the Jaito problem. While the Nabha authorities and the Akali Leadership were busy negotiation over the various issues, the passage, in the meantime, of the Sikh *Gurdwaras* and Shrine Bills, automatically settled the Jaito and other issues. With regard to the Nabha Affair, Malcolm Hailey, the Governor of the Punjab made the following declaration;

The Administrator of Nabha will permit bands of pilgrims to proceed for religious worship to the Gangsar *Gurdwara* under the certain rules.<sup>101</sup> After the passage of the Bill, Bhai Jodh Singh, Sardar Narain Singh and other Sikh Members of the Legislative Council met the Akali leaders in jail and obtained their approval of the Bill and stopping of *Jathas* to Bhai Pheru and Jaito. Bhai Jodh Singh arranged with Mr. Wilson Johnson, the Administrator of Nabha, for the completion of the Akand Paths at Jaito. The first *Jatha*, consisting among others the *Udāsī* and *Nirmala Sadhus*, left Akal Takhat under the leadership of Bhai Jodh Singh and arrived at Jaito on 21 July 1925. Another *Jatha* arrived from Delhi the same day. On 27 July 1925, more *Jathas* reached Jaito after being released from the Nabha Beers and other jails. The deadlock finally ended with the Akalis completing their 101 *Akhand Paths* on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1925<sup>102</sup>. The question of Maharaja Restoration was still unsettled.

The refusal of the Maharaja to give the required statement to the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and his public dissociation with the Akalis and their agitation further weakened the position of those Akali leaders who still wanted to carry on the struggle for his restoration. Whatever might have been the facts of his case, the Maharaja had at the stage, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi; ‘made it practically impossible for his well wishers to carry on an effective agitation for his restoration’<sup>103</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, pp. 229, 233, 235.

<sup>101</sup> Mohinder Singh, p. 84.

<sup>102</sup> File No. 112-IV/1926, Home Political, N.A.I as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p.84.

<sup>103</sup> Letter of Mahatma Gandhi to the Akali Leaders, quoted in Ganda Singh (Ed.) Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement, as quoted by Mohinder Singh. p. 55.

Maharaja accused Akalis of being treacherous and unfaithful and requested them not to give up the issue of his restoration<sup>104</sup>. After the passage of the Bill and the dropping of the Nabha question by the Akali leadership, he was suddenly removed from Dehra Dun to far-off Kodai Kanal in the South to spend the remaining part of his life, in virtual exile till his death on 14 December 1942.

### III

Finally, the Bill met all the Akali demands and on 2 Nov 1925, The Sikh *Gurdwara* and Shrines act was enforced.<sup>105</sup> The act, as its preamble declares, aimed at providing "for the better administration of certain Sikh *Gurdwaras* and for enquiries into matters and settlement of disputes connected there with..."

The Act has three parts. **Part I** contains, besides preliminary matters such as title, extent and definitions, reference to *Gurdwaras* covered by the Act, procedure for bringing other *Gurdwaras* under its purview, and appointment of and procedures for a *Gurdwara* Tribunal. Interestingly, the definition clause does not define a "Sikh *Gurdwara*," but a subsequent clause, Section 2.10, lays down a "notified Sikh *Gurdwara*" as any *Gurdwara* "declared by notification of the local government under the provision of this Act to be a Sikh *Gurdwara*." Chapter I of this part ( Sections 3 to 11) and the schedules referred to therein are the vital part of the Act.

Two categories of Sikh *Gurdwara* are envisaged, scheduled and unscheduled.

<sup>104</sup> For text of the Letter see Ganda Singh (Ed.), Confidential Papers of the *Akali* Movement, pp. 172-4., as quoted by Mohinder Singh, p. 85.

<sup>105</sup> In the entire agitation (at Tarn Taran, Nankana Sahib, Guru-Ka-Bagh, Bhai Pheru and Jaito) , it is estimated, thirty thousands of the Sikhs went to jail, 15 lacs Rupees were collected as fine. About 400 lives were lost and number of wounded was about 2000; Khushwant Singh, *History Of The Sikhs*, vol. 2, pp. 212-213. The Sikh *Gurdwaras* Act of 1925 had two schedules; the first listed 232 shrines. Another 28 were added to the lists which were recognized as Sikh *Gurdwaras* without further enquiry. The second schedule listed 224 *Akharas* of *Udāsīs* or Nirmalas which were not to be declared *gurdwaras* unless they fulfilled certain conditions. Any Sikh could put in a petition within one year to have any institution (except those listed in the second schedule) declared a *gurdwara*; Khushwant Singh, *History Of The Sikhs*, vol. 2, pp. fn 34; Also see; S.C Mittal, *Freedom Movement in Punjab*, (1905-1929), p. 179; See, Appendix, II, III and IV.  
5 April 1921-First Sikh *Gurdwaras* and Shrines Bill introduced in the Pb. Legal Council.  
7 Nov. 1922 – Second Sikh *Gurdwaras* and Shrines Bill introduced in the Pb. Legal Council.  
7 July 1925 – Sikh *Gurdwaras* and Shrines Bill passed in the Punjab Legal Council.  
28 July 1925 – *Gurdwara* Bill gets the approval of Governor General.  
2 Nov 1925 – The Sikh *Gurdwara* and Shrines act enforced. Also see;  
[http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Gurdwara\\_Reform\\_Movement](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Gurdwara_Reform_Movement) ;  
[http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Jaito\\_Morcha](http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Jaito_Morcha)

**Schedule 1** contains Important historical shrines where there could be no doubt about their being Sikh *Gurdwara* indisputably owned by Sikhs are listed in Schedule I of the Act. Originally two hundred and forty one *Gurdwaras* were entered in this Schedule, out of which sixty five remained in Pakistan after the partition of the Punjab. However, one hundred and seventy three more *Gurdwaras* within the state of Patiala and East Punjab States Union were added to it by the Amending Act of 1959.

**Schedule II** contains the details of institutions which were not "Sikh" *gurdwaras* about the control of which no dispute could be raised. It enlisted two hundred and twenty four *Akharas* of *Udāsīs* or Nirmalas which were not to be declared *Gurdwaras* unless they fulfilled certain conditions. A list of one hundred and sixteen *Deras*, *Akharas* and *Dharmshalas* was declared as *Udāsī* institutions without any further enquiry. In respect of *Gurdwaras* listed in these two schedules or the scheduled *Gurdwaras* as they are called, the State Government issued a notification in the official Gazette, declaring them to be Sikh *Guudwaras*. The notification also detailed the property claimed by each *Gurdwara*.

A tribunal of three judges was set up to determine whether an institution was or was not a *Gurdwara* and the compensation, if any to be paid to any one deprived of possession. The tribunal's findings were subject to appeal to the High Court. The act provided for elected bodies to replace the *mahants*. The central body, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee was to consist of 151 members of whom 120 were to be elected, 12 nominated by the Sikh states, 14 to be co-opted, and 5 to represent the four chief shrines of the faith.

Local *gurdwaras* were to have their own elected bodies of management with one nominee of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee on its committee. The act also indicated in what way the income of *gurdwaras* was to be utilized. The most important part of the act was to define a Sikh as "one who believed in the ten gurus and the *Granth Sahib* and was not a *patit*(apostate)." This last provision was particularly odious to the Hindu members of the Legislative Council. The Sikh *Gurdwaras* and Shrines Bill gave the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee supreme control over two hundred and forty one important and historic *Gurdwaras* under undisputed Akali control.

## IV

Comparative analysis of the Census figures of the *Udāsīs* from 1881 onwards shows a regular decline in their numerical strength. The reports show that the number of Hindu *Udāsīs* had always been more than the Sikh *Udāsīs*. There was a general decrease in the figures of the Hindus in the Censuses of 1911 and 1931, but the number of Hindu *Udāsīs* between the years from 1921 to 1931 increased by 5.3 %. In 1921, the number of Hindu *Udāsīs* was, 2,661 and in 1931 it rose to 2,803. On the other hand, the population of the Sikhs was growing at the each Census, except during the decade from 1881 to 1891 and in 1881 it was considerably less than half of what was recorded in 1931. In 1881, the Sikhs numbered 1,706,909 and by 1931 they numbered 4,071,624<sup>106</sup>, whereas the number of *Udāsīs* had always remained low.

It is important to note that the highest increase in the number of the *Udāsīs* in fifty years from 1881 to 1931 was in the year of 1881, when 14,149 *Udāsīs* recorded themselves as Hindu *Udāsīs* and 2,243 as Sikh *Udāsīs*, the total number being 16,392. In the coming years, their number showed a downward trend. In 1891, the recorded number of the Hindu *Udāsīs* was 11,835 and the Sikh *Udāsīs* was 4,170, the total being 16,005. In 1901, those who recorded themselves as the Hindu *Udāsīs* were 9,017 and the Sikh *Udāsīs* 2,258, the total being 11,275. In 1911, the number was still decreasing, when there were 2,031 Hindu *Udāsīs* and 1,470 Sikh *Udāsīs*, total being 3,501, recorded as the *Udāsīs*. In 1921, the ratio was 2,661 and 842, the total being 3,503. The resumption of revenue-free-grants, the Akali - *Udāsī* conflict, and the Gurdwara Reform Movement served a serious setback and the *Udāsīs* started sending petitions to the British Government authorities requesting them to consider them as Hindus, instead of recording them as Sikhs in the Census of 1931, as they already had been termed as Sikhs in the previous Census of 1921. But, result was that in 1931,

<sup>106</sup> *Census of India 1931 Vol XVII ,Punjab,Part 1 ,Khan Ahmed Khan ,Lahore 1933,P.306 .*

<b>Census</b>	<b>Absolute figure for Sikhs</b>	<b>% increase</b>	<b>proportion per 10,000</b>
❖ 1881	1,706,909	--	822
❖ 1891	1,849,371	8.4	809
1901	2,102,813	13.7	863
1911	2,881,495	37.0	1,211
1921	3,107,296	7.8	1,238
1931	4,071,624	31.0	1,429
❖	Includes figures for Delhi.		

those who recorded them as Hindu *Udāsīs*, were only 2,803, and the number of Sikh *Udāsīs* was only 385, the total being 3,188 only.

Surprisingly, the *Udāsīs* who generally practised celibacy, had 3,150 female Hindu *Udāsīs* and 665 Sikh female *Udāsīs* in 1881. The total of female *Udāsīs* recorded in 1881 was 3,815. In 1901, the number of female Hindu *Udāsīs* was 1,863 and Sikh female *Udāsīs* 502, the total being 2,365. During the thirty Years from 1881 to 1901, the number of female *Udāsīs* was also decreasing. It is significant to note that they asserted their position in thirty years form 1881 to 1901. Afterwards, because of the upcoming political changes the females did not bother to get themselves registered in the Census Reports.

					Total
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	Male	10999	female	3150	14,149
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Male	1578	Female	665	2243
<b>Total</b>					16,392

(Reports on the *Census of Punjab, 1881*, Vol-II, Appendix-A, pp. 35, 36 and Vol-III, Appendix-B, PP23-24 by D.C.J Ibbetson, Lahore ,1883; *Final report on the Revision of settlement 1878-1883 of Ludhiana District*, in Punjab, T .Gordon Walker, Calcutta, 1844 p. 42 recorded 2,366 *Udāsīs* as Sikh ascetics.)

					Total
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	Caste	11817	Sect	18	11835
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Caste	3173	Sect	997	4170
<b>Total</b>					16,005

(*Census of India, 1891*, Report Vol. –XX, XXI, *The Punjab and its Feudatories*, by E.D.Maclagan, Part-II & III, Calcutta ,1892, pp.826-829,572-573; recorded 10,518, Hindus and 1,165 Sikhs as *Udāsīs*)

British Territories :-

					Total
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	Male	7154	Female	1863	9017
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Male	1756	Female	502	2258
<b>Total</b>					11,275

Native states

					Total
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	Male	2811	Female	654	3465
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Male	1449	Female	416	1865
<b>Total</b>					5,330

(*Census Report of India, 1901, Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, Vol - XVII, Part-I by H .A.Rose, Government Central Printing Office, Simla, 1902, p.134, 122; Only 401 Sikhs returned as *Udāsīs* by sect. and 4,213 *Udāsīs* got themselves registered as Sikhs by religion. Where as Sikhs numbered 2,130,987 against 1,870,481 in 1891 and increase of 260,506 or 13.9%.)

					<b>Total</b>
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	2031				2031
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Keshdhari	879	Sahajdhari	591	1470
				<b>Total</b>	3,501

(*Census of India 1911* vol XIV Punjab, Part-I, Report by Hari Kishan Kaul, Lahore, 1912, pp.116,156)

					<b>Total</b>
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	2661				2661
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Keshdhari	776	Sahajdhari	66	842
				<b>Total</b>	3,503

(*Census of India 1921*, vol –XV Punjab and Delhi, Part I, Report by L.Middleton and S.M.Jacob, Lahore, 1923 pp.180, 185.)

					<b>Total</b>
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	2803				2803
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	Keshdhari	16	Sahajdhari	369	385
				<b>Total</b>	3,188

(*Census of India*, 1931, Vol –XVII, *Punjab*, Part –I, Report, by Khan Ahmed Hasan Khan, Lahore, 1933, pp.301, 309)

## V

The *Akalis*, who had won their struggle against the *Mahants* and the Government control over their *Gurdwaras*, now turned against each other. During the period from 1920 to 25, the Hindus supported the *Udāsī Mahants* against the *Akalis*. This widened the gulf between the two communities. The break away from Hinduism, to which Kahan Singh of Nabha had given expression in his Pamphlet '*Hindu Nahin Hain*' was even more emphatically stated by Mehtab Singh in a speech he delivered in the first *Gurdwara Bill*<sup>107</sup>. Whether the Sikhs were a separate people or a branch of the Hindu social system became a major issue in the years that followed. Similarly, the *Udāsīs* started styling themselves as Hindus and requested the British Government authorities that in the previous Censuses they were termed as Sikhs and now they be considered Hindus in the Census of 1931 and not as Sikhs.

<sup>107</sup> P.L.C.D., April 8, 1921, P. 583, as quoted by Khushwant Singh, Vol-2, 1839-1988, p.214.

## VI

In order to maintain their respectable position in the changed historical situation, the *udāsīs* started making petitions requesting that they should be considered as *sadhus* and distinct from the beggars in the forthcoming Census of 1931. *Udāsī Mahamandal, Punjab, Gujranwala; Sindh prant Udāsī Sadhu Mahamandal, Karachi; Sri Guru Sri Chander Updeshak Sabha, Sakhar, Sindh; Udāsin Mahamandal, Meva Mandi, Lahore; Puna Udāsīn Mandal; Panchayti Akhara Bara Udāsīn, Allahabad; Sadhu Bela Tirath, Sindh* and many other *udāsī Mahants* and *udāsī* associations sent their petitions mentioning “We have observed with pain that there is reserved one column in which under the heading of “*Sadhus*” the profession beggars are also entered and thus classed as “*Sadhus*”. The term “*Sadhus*” amongst Hindus in India signifies those who preach religion or, are incharge, management or control of religious institutions and their status in life is looked upon with respect and reverence. Whereas the profession of begging is confined mostly to very low classes amongst the Hindus and very often to those who are termed untouchables very commonly known in province of Sindh as “*Menghwar*”. It may be that one thing is common between those two classes, that both live on public money but the former viz: the Hindu “*Sadhus*” on account of the services of a very high order that they render to the public, just as priests and ministers among the missionaries in England, France, Italy, and other places on the continent of Europe and the latter viz: the beggars in order to avoid doing honest labour to earn their living take the begging and are thus burden on the society instead of being of any help or assistance to the Society or State. ....” Under the circumstances we pray that you will be pleased to issue directions for the next census that only those persons should be classed as “*Sadhus*” who are such within the liberal and colloquial meaning and significance of the term “*Sadhus*” as used and understood in this country and entered under the column which in the form of the Census of 1921 bore No. 165 with the heading “Priests Ministers” etc”.

The *Udāsīs* also requested the Census Commissioner that they were termed as Sikhs in the census records of 1921 and that in the forthcoming census of 1931 the *Udāsī Sadhus* be termed as Hindus. They made it clear that if they were not considered as Hindus they would be forced to show their resentment through



bycotting the census of 1931<sup>108</sup>. They mentioned “the *Udāsī Sadhus* are Hindus and in every census they are entered in the column of Hindus and not with Sikh community because Sikh community is quite separate from us, *Udāsī Sadhus* are not Sikhs and Sikh are not *Udāsīs*. We worship according to Sanatani Hindus and it is the duty of *Udāsī Sadhus* to preach the religious duties, while the Sikhs do not belong to the preaching class, therefore the Provincial Governments may be advised to enter the *Sadhus* in the column of Hindus and not with Sikhs”.

The Census Commissioner assured the petitioners that differentiation between religious Mendicants and mere beggars will be kept in view<sup>109</sup> and would be considered as ‘Religious Mendicants’ under group 164, order 45 (Religion) class C (Public Administration and Liberal Arts) whereas beggars were to be returned under group 193 as ‘Beggars and Vagrants’, order 54 (Beggars etc.), class D. (miscellaneous), sub-class XII (un-productive). Responding to the petitioners the Census Commissioner’s letter read<sup>110</sup>, “It is understood that the majority of the *Udāsīs* belonged to the Sikh community ten years ago, and in consequently the instructions for recording them as Sikhs were included in the Punjab census code of 1921. It is now reported that the majority are Hindus. Consequently a return of religion Hindu, Caste, *Udāsī* will be included with Hindus and not with Sikhs. The representation is the result of misunderstanding, and the Superintendent of Census operation, Punjab is amending these instructions so as to leave no doubt on the point. The petitioners may be advised accordingly”<sup>111</sup>.

1. The President Sri *Guru* Sri Chandra Usadin upadeshak Sabha, Sukkur (sind)
2. Swami Parmanand, President Udasin Mahamandal, Mewa Mandi, Lahore
3. Mahant Chattar Das *Udāsī* Sadh, Bassian, Tehsil Jagraon, Distt. Ludhiana

<sup>108</sup> Home/Public Department, file no. 45/47/30-Entry of *Udasi Sadhus* in the Column for Hindus in the forth coming census 1930.; also see, Sant Ram, *Udāsī Sikh Nahin*, Chander Press, Amritsar, 1927. pp.1.69; See Appendix VII.

<sup>109</sup> Home/Public department U.O.I, No.D, 4996, Pub/D/12-11-1930 file no. 45/47/30.

<sup>110</sup> Census of Punjab 1881, Vol-2, Appendix-A

<sup>111</sup> Home/Public department U.O.I, No. D, 4996, Pub/D/12-11-1930 file no. 45/47/30. Entry of *Udasi Sadhus* in the column for Hindus in the forth coming census 1930; No’s and dates of the correspondence:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| I.   | O.M. from the P.S.V., no 3443-G.P., dt. 15-11-30 |
| II.  | O.M. from the P.S.V., no 3539-G.P. dt. 26-11-30  |
| III. | O.M. from the P.S.V., no 3570-G.P. dt. 28-11-30  |
| IV.  | O.M. from the P.S.V., no 3572-G.P. dt. 28-11-30  |
| V.   | O.M. from the P.S.V., no 3573-G.P. dt. 28-11-30  |
| VI.  | O.M. from the P.S.V., no 3574-G.P. dt. 28-11-30  |

4. Gopal Das S/o Hari Das *Udāsī Sadh* of raina, P.O. Bhani Saheb, Tehsil and District Ludhiana
5. Bhagwan Das Chela Bhup Dass, *Sadh Udāsī* of Rajkot, Tehsil Jagraon, Distt. Ludhiana
6. Bishan Das, Chela Sharan Das *Udāsī Sadh*, of Raikot, Tehsil, Jagraon, Distt. Ludhiana. F45/47/30, public, dated 4 Dec. 1930.<sup>112</sup>

Similar letters from the Census Commissioner were sent to Gyan Das chela of Moti Ram *Udāsī Sadh* village Sadhar, Tehsil Jagraon, Distt. Ludhiana and Sewa Das Chela of Charan Das *Sadh Udāsī*<sup>113</sup>; Sri Sadhbella Tirath Sukkur, petition no. 633-D, dated 1 Dec. 1930; Sri *Mahant* Harinam, President Sind prant *Udāsī* Sadhu association,<sup>114</sup> Gangadas, secretary, Poona Udasin Mandal, 3 Vetel Peth, Poona city No. D-239/31, dated 16 Jan. 1931;<sup>115</sup> the President Akhil Bharat Varshiaya Sri *Guru* Sri Chandra Udasin Updeshak Sabha, Sukkur, Sind, No. D. 128/31 Public, dt. 15 Jan. 1931; Dharmdas, secretary, Panchayati, *Akhara* Baba Udasin Kdygunj, Allahabad, no. D. 5687/30 Public dt., 5 Jan. 1930; *Mahant* Gurdial as Jambi, no. D.978/31 dt. 21 Feb., 1931; *Udāsī* Sunder Das of Ludhiana; *Mahant* Darshan Das, village Maniary, P.O. Silout, Distt Muzaffarpur (Bihar)<sup>116</sup>; Sri *Mahant* Hariram, president, Sind prant *Udāsī* Sadhu association (Maha Mandal) C/o the secretary, Bawa Charndas, Mithadhar, Karachi letter dt. 11.12.30; *Mahant* Har Parsad, village Heran, P.O. Talwandi Rai, Distt. Ludhiana dt. 16.12.30.

Requests were made by Mela Singh S/o Jawahar Singh dt. 18.12.30 from Sarhali; *Mahant* Sita Ram Das Shastri President, All India *sadhus sabha*, Panchavati, Nasik, dt. 26 Dec. 30<sup>117</sup>; and through telegrams to the Viceroy from the *Mahant* of Dehra Dun and *Mahant* Gurdial Das dt. 12.2.31 to enumerate *Udāsīs* as Hindus and not Sikhs<sup>3</sup>; petition dated 10 Feb. 1931 by Swami Parmanand, President *Udāsī* Maha Mandal, Punjab, Gujranwala that *Udāsīs* to be considered as Hindus not Sikhs<sup>118</sup>.

<sup>112</sup> Home/Public department file no. 45/47/30.

<sup>113</sup> Loc. Cit; O.M. from P.S.V., no. 3613-G.P., dt. 4 Dec. 1930 ; O.M. from P.S.V., no. 3615-G.P. dt. 4 Dec. 1930

<sup>114</sup> Home/Public department file no. 45/47/30; (Maha Mandal) C/o Bawa Charndas, adhar, Karachi, No. D. 5688/30 pub dt. 5 Jan. 1930; Three such petitions were also made to the Census Commissioner from Scehroli(Sahrli) but reply could not be sent to these petitioners as the post and telegraph guide did not show any place by the name of Sehrli in Ludhiana.

<sup>115</sup> Loc. Cit.

<sup>116</sup> Loc. Cit.

<sup>117</sup> Loc. Cit.

<sup>118</sup> Foreign/Political Department. Reform Branch, File no. 42-R/31.

## VI

Thus, we find that many cases to save the institutions under their control were filed by the *Udāsīs* whereas they were countered by the Sikhs. All India Reporter 1945 Sind 177 mentioned that ‘the *Udāsīs* are schismatic holding a position somewhere between orthodox Hindus and Sikhs.’<sup>119</sup> The All India Reporter 1939 Lahore said, ‘though they worship *Samadhs*, etc., they do owe reverence to the *Granth Sahib* without completely renouncing Hinduism. Owing to their, this intermediate position, it is possible for *Udāsīs* to be in-charge of so called Sikh *Gurdwara* property. It however does not follow that the institution is a Sikh *Gurdwara* and not true *Udāsī* institution merely because the *Granth Sahib* is recited in it. Again this does not entitle the Sikhs to claim to be associated in the management of the institution’<sup>120</sup>.

A case decided by the Honourable Lahore High Court by Double Bench (D.B.) Consisting of Honourable Justice Addison and Monroe and reported in 1934 All India Reporter at page 180, first appeal no.1875 of 1931, decided on 15 Nov. 1933. The case is regarding a *Dharmshala* at *Sangatpura* in Amritsar District. Sohan Das and his brother the petitioners asserted that Sohan Das was the *Mahant* of the *Dharmshala* situated at *Sangatpura* in Amritsar. They claimed that the *Dharmshala* was not a Sikh Gurudwara, rather it had been a place of public worship since 1853. The *Dharmshala* contained a *samadh* and that the *Mahants* are *Udāsīs* who do not fall into Gurudwara Act. The claim was objected by Bela Singh and others that the place of worship had been so since 1853 and such worship was connected with the *Granth Sahib* and the village where *Dharmshala* was situated was a Sikh village. They asserted that the *Samadh* existed from recent times more probably after the Sikh Gurudwara controversy had become acute and the importance of the *Samadh* had been realized by the *Udāsī Mahants*. Thirdly, the institution falls within Sikh Gurudwara act (8 of 1925) S.16 (2) (iii).<sup>121</sup>

The court asked the *Patwari* of *Sangatpura* to send his report. The report of *Patwari* mentioned three points of observation. Firstly, that the *Dharmshala* was built of *kuttcha* massonary. It was a Sikh Village and the *Granth Sahib* was recited over

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<sup>119</sup> AIR 1945, Sind, p. 177 (Sikh Gurdwaras Act. 1925, p. 16)

<sup>120</sup> AIR 1939, Lahore, p. 239; The Panjab Local Acts 1825-1988, Vol. XI, Punjab Law Agency, Chandigarh, 1988, p. 400.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 1934, Lahore, pp. 180-181.

there. Secondly, in 1890 when *Mahant* Ram Das had stated that *Granth* Sahib was recited, he did not mention about the existence of *samadh*. When the Sikh Villagers complained against the conduct of Sham Dass on July 25, 1912, an order was made by Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar for a mutation of the *Muafi* in the name of the *Dharmasala* with Sohan Das as manager. Thirdly, it was only in 1911 when the petitioner Sohan Das filed the case that he claimed it to be a *Dharmasala* where *Granth* Sahib was recited by him and his brother and that there was a *Samadh* also. It was on this basis that he claimed it to be an *Udāsī dera*. The Tribunal finally observed that there was no documentary evidence of the early existence of *Samadh*. It is a later thought probably prompted by Gurudwara controversy 1925 that the petitioner had realized the importance of *Samadh* and laid false claims. The tribunal decision declared in favor of *Dharmasala* to be a *Gurudwara* and the judge Addison declared “I hold therefore that the evidence supports the conclusion of the majority of the Tribunal that this institution fall with in S.16 (2) (iii) of the Act and the Tribunal dismissed this appeal with costs”<sup>122</sup>. Means it is not *Udāsī* establishment but a Sikh Gurudwara.

The case of Mul Singh verses Harnam Singh reported in the All India Reporter 1934 Lahore 173, first appeal no. 1366 of 1931 decided in the court of Addison and Monroe J.J on 28 November 1933. The petitioner Mul Singh claimed that *Dharmasala* in *Pindi Bhattian* in Gujranwala District was not a Sikh *Gurudwara*, become certain Hindus performed Puja over there. But the objectors Harnam Singh and others claimed that it was a Sikh Shrine as *Granth Sahib* was worshipped there, and it was established for the use by Sikhs for purpose of public worship. The Judge Addison observed that as a few or certain Hindus worshipped *Granth Sahib* there, does not conclude that the shrine was of Hindus. Secondly Mul Singh claimed that *dharmasla* in *Pindi Bhattian* in Gujranwala was not a Sikh Shrine and that *Dharmasala* was founded by the ancestors of Mul Singh during the times of Ranjit Singh in 1804 and grants were given by Sardar Dal Singh Kalianwala in 1804 and by Diwan Sawan Mal in 1834 one of the Kardars of Ranjit Singh<sup>123</sup>. Thirdly, the earlier holders of the *Dera* were Bhai Sujan Singh and Bhai Jagat Singh. Jagat Singh died in 1862 ad was succeeded by Hardial Singh who was succeeded by Hira Singh the father of Mul Singh. Hira Singh was Succeeded by Ladha Singh and then by Hazura Singh brother

<sup>122</sup> AIR, 1934, Lahore, pp. 180,181.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 1934, Lahore, pp. 173,174.

of Mul Singh. Mul Singh succeeded his brother. Fourthly, *Pindi Bhattian* was a small town, containing Hindu Arora community, many of whom were Sikhs. The Sikhs were in majority in the town and the Hindus who believed in *Guru Granth Sahib* were considered as *Sahejdhari* Sikhs. He observed that the Hindus of Punjab and of *Pindi Bhattian* read and respected *Granth Sahib*. So the petitioner had claimed it to be a *Dharmsala* of *Udasis*.

The judge Addison's final observation was that *Dharmsala* was founded by ancestor of petitioner, grants were made by Ranjit Singh, *Granth Sahib* was read there in 1858 and in 1863, to which the both sides agree, petitioner Mul Singh & his brother Hazura Singh, made a statement on the death of their father Hari Singh that both them rendered service at *Dharmsala* and read *Granth Sahib* aloud. Mul Singh a zaildar and a Sikh preacher held a *Diman* at *Dharmsala* in 1907.<sup>124</sup> He was asked to do so by the Sikhs and *Sehjdharis* of the place. He baptized 13 or 14 of those who attended including Mul Singh the present petitioner. He made an appeal for funds and in this respect his statement was corroborated by Kartar Singh, another witness. This evidence established that Mul Singh was a Sikh though Mul Singh has denied this. The evidence of Darshan Singh cousin of Mul Singh stated that 4 or 5 years back the Sikh *Sangat* of the town had expelled Mul Singh and appointed him as the *Granthi* of the *Gurudwara*. It was declared "of these facts that this institution cannot be held to be a Hindu institution", so the Tribunal dismissed the appeal with costs.<sup>125</sup>

Another such case filed in the court of Addison and Monroe J.J., AIR 1934 Lahore 398, was of petitioner Puran Das V/s Kartar Singh and others, first appeal no. 920, 1931, decided on 29 Jan. 1934. The petitioner Puran Das claimed that *Gurdwara Jagranwan Wala* situated in Kasel in Amritsar, District was a *Udāsī dera*<sup>126</sup>. His case was contested by Kartar Singh and others. *Gurduwara* was found around 1823, the earliest evidence of which is contained in *Mauafi* proceedings. Through an order of extra assistant commissioner, Amritsar made on 20 Sept. 1853 (ex-O-A-2) it was found that *Granth Sahib* was read in this institution which was established about 30 years ago. *Granthi Sahib* Das's statement made on 27 Sept. 1851 showed that the *Dera* was handed over to his predecessor for rendering service to *Dharmsala*; there were also *samadhs* at Kasel and that in cumbents have always been *Udāsīs*. Monroe observed

<sup>124</sup> AIR 1934 Lahore, pp. 173, 174.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 1934 Lahore, p. 173.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 1934, Lahore, p. 398.

“In my opinion the objectors have established that this institution was established for use by Sikhs for the purpose of Public worship. It follows that the findings of the Tribunal is correct and I would dismiss this appeal with costs.” Addison agreed to Monroe’s view<sup>127</sup> that this was not *Udāsī Dera* rather a Sikh *Gurdwara*.

Legislation passed by the Punjab Legislative Council which marked the culmination of the struggle of the Sikh people from 1920 to wrest control of their places of worship from the *Mahants* or priests into whose hands they had passed during the eighteenth century, when the Khalsa were driven from their homes to seek safety in remote hills and deserts. When they later on established their sway in the Punjab, the Sikhs rebuilt their shrines endowing them with large *jagirs* and estates. The management, however, remained with the priests, belonging mainly to the *Udāsī* sect, who, after the advent of the British in 1849, began to consider the shrines and lands attached to them as their personal properties and to appropriating the income accruing from them to their private use. Some of them alienated or sold *Gurdwara* properties at will. They had introduced ceremonial which was anathema to orthodox Sikhs. Besides, there were complaints of immorality against them. All these factors gave rise to what is known as the Gurudwara Reform movement during which Sikhs had to court jail on a large scale and suffer atrocity and death.

The British government, favoured the priests, eventually relented under popular pressure and padded, in the first instance, Sikh *Gurdwara* and Shrines Act, which envisaged a committee nominated by the government to take over control of the *Gurdwaras*. This, however, was not acceptable to the *Akali* leaders and remained for this reason a dead letter. The agitation continued and the government had another draft worked out. Akali counsel was sought this time and the principal demand about the shrines being handed over or the management to a representative body of the Sikhs was conceded. The Bill was moved in the Punjab Legislative Council by Sardar Tara Singh of Moga on 7 May 1925 and piloted by another Sikh member. Bhai Jodh Singh, eminent educationist and theologian. The bill was, in the first instance, referred to a select committee which presented its report on 20 June. The Council passed the bill on 7 July. It was published in the Punjab Government Gazette on 7 Aug. and it became operative on 1 Nov. 1925 as The Sikh *Gurdwaras* Act, 1925 (Punjab Act VIII of 1925).

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<sup>127</sup> *AIR*, 1934, Lahore, p. 398.

## CHAPTER-VIII

### CONCLUSION

The present work brings to light the state of affairs of the *Udāsīs* in the colonial Punjab in comparison to their position under the predecessors of the new rulers. Among all the non-conformists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries within the Sikh history and tradition, the *Udāsīs* alone survived as a prominent religious group and flourished more significantly during the period of Sikh rule. The respect they paid to Guru Nanak, *Guru Granth Sahib* and the early Sikh traditions, brought them close to the Sikhs, who acknowledged their presence in the *Gurdwara*, and considered them part and parcel of their faith. Their humanitarian efforts, philanthropic works, affable association with general public, undisruptive activities and pro-establishment stance towards the state helped in the preservation and growth of the Sikh faith and its tenets in the troubled times of the Sikh history. Another notable cause of their growing affinity with the Sikhs was that the new Order of preachers, called the *Udāsīs*, attained more prominence due to the fact that the *Masands* had become greedy and corrupt. Coming to the later period of the Mughal rule, the *Udāsīs* alone functioned with the old trust and served as custodians of the Sikh shrines. In the darkest days of the Sikh history, when the regular Sikhs were away from their homes or were engaged in fighting, the *Udāsīs* kept the torch of Sikhism burning high.

#### I

The *Udāsīs* emerged in the sixteenth century under Baba Sri Chand, the eldest son of Nanak, propagating and accepting the theory of penance, restraint and asceticism, contrary to Nanak's admiration and belief in family life. Sri Chand remained a celibate throughout his life. Though Sri Chand's relations with Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das remained strained, but later on, he seems to have developed cordial relations with Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Hargobind. Moreover, Baba Sri Chand is believed to have passed the *Udāsīs's* line of succession to Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind. But, it is difficult to uphold this claim of the *Udāsīs* as no certain date of the death of Baba Sri Chand is available. It is further believed that Baba Gurditta established the four Orders of the *Udāsīs*, called the

*dhuans* (hearths) which came to be known as the *adi-Udāsīs*. Besides the four *dhunas*, there emerged six *bakshishes* (bounties) and various sub-*bakshishes* during the pontificates of Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh for the expansion and consolidation of the *Udāsī* movement.

## II

The *Udāsī* centres played a significant role in establishing a distinct identity of the *Udāsīs*. The word establishment has been used for *Akharas*, *Asthan*, *Deras*, *Darbars*, *Dharmshalas*, *Samadhs*, and *Gurdwaras* which once were under the control and management of the *Udāsī Mahants*. The *Udāsī* establishments were found not only in the Punjab but also in other parts of the Indian sub-continent. Most of the *Udāsī* establishments, with a few exceptions, came into prominence during the period of Sikh rule, particularly during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The *Udāsī* centres were found concentrated in the districts of Bari, Rachna and Bist Jalandhar Doabs.

By the time, the British annexed the Punjab, the number of the *Udāsī* establishments was over two hundred and fifty, which included both large and small centres. Many of these centers continued to the British times and significantly, by 1920s, when the *Akali-Udāsī* conflict over the issue of identity and control of the Sikh *Gurdwaras* was at its height, the number of *Udāsī* establishments was reduced to only eighty one. Interestingly, in 1950's, according to, a research scholar of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Randhir Singh, the number of the centres still under the control of *Udāsīs* was about one hundred and twenty three. However, decrease in the number of *Udāsī* Centres may be explained with reference to the partial withdrawal of the *dharmarth* grants of the *Udāsīs* by the new rulers. This proved a major set back to the *Udāsīs* and the number of their establishments in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of the Singh Sabhas and the Gurdwara Reform movement also further affected the position of the *Udāsīs* under the British. The highest concentration of the *Udāsī* establishments even in early 20<sup>th</sup> century was found almost in the same areas or the districts, as it existed during the period of Sikh rule. Moreover, though the number of *Udāsī* centres gradually decreased in those districts, the core area of the *Udāsī* influence, however, remained the same during the different phases of their history under the British.



The *Udāsī* establishments played an important role in the indigenous system of education in the Punjab. Religious education of fundamental character was given in almost all the *Udāsī* institutions. In the documentary evidence available in abundance in the National archives of India, New Delhi, relating to *dharmarth* lands of the *Udāsīs*, references to separate schools of Gurmukhi and Sanskrit were found attached with some of the famous *Udāsīs Akharas*. *Udāsī* institutions giving instructions both in Gurmukhi and Sanskrit were found scattered over more than half a dozen district of the Punjab in districts Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Montgomery, Bannu, Jhang, Ludhiana and Jalandhar. *Udāsī* Centres imparting religious education outside the Punjab were located as Benaras, Vrindavan and Haridwar.

### III

The *Udāsī* centres differed in size and influence, which was determined by the state patronage enjoyed by each. The *Udāsī* institutions had been patronized by the Mughal and the Sikh rulers. Significantly, during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the *Udāsīs* received the maximum number of *dharmarth* grants next to the Sodhis and Bedis, who strictly speaking did not constitute religious group among the Sikhs. The British administration in Punjab initially accepted the existing religious institutions and even the individual mendicants, *faqirs* and ascetics in entirety and extended the existing fiscal endowments already in existence, without much change. The new rulers, like their Mughal and Sikh predecessors, expected all the grantees not only to pray for the welfare of the state or their territories, but also to enlist support in matters socio-political.

The British Government appointed special officers and they were entrusted the task to evaluate and justify the existence of religious grants sanctioned by the earlier rulers to the *Udāsī* individuals and the institutions. The purpose of this exercise was to check the misappropriation of funds, to seek proper allegiance of the religious establishments and to reduce the amount of grant if need be. The British records show that in many cases the officer reduced the volume of the grants and in some cases, it continued according to the old pattern, but in all the cases, it was made mandatory for the receiver to follow certain terms and conditions laid by the new government. In this way, the government could count for their support to the government.

Towards the close of the Sikh rule about seventy percent of the total *Udāsī* establishments enjoyed state patronage, in addition to the grants received from several individuals. It is important to note that the majority of the *Udāsī* establishments lost nearly twenty five percent of their grants in the 1850's and suffered further losses on the death of the reigning *Mahants*. Even in 1881, the *Udāsīs* were having larger numerical strength than any other religious group among the Sikhs and were the greater recipients of the land grants. Situation changed in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the Sikhs due o the Akali-*Udāsī* conflict formed Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925, to regain the control of the *Gurdwaras* and the *Darbars* from the *Udāsī Mahants*. As a matter of result, the *Udāsīs* made consistent efforts to disassociate themselves from the Sikhs by declaring themselves as part and parcel of the Hindus. This definitely led to the gradual decrease in the number and worth of the *Udāsī* establishments having significant socio-religious and economic implications.

#### IV

The paradox about the *Udāsī* organization is that at the outset it looks united and cohesive but internally it was not so. Even the British records mention about the independent nature of each *Udāsī* establishment. The *Udāsī* institution was managed by the chief called *Mahant*. On my visit to Bara Akhara Kankhal, Haridwar, I came across a published Memorandum of rules and regulations relating to the *Udāsī* institutions. From the pamphlet, it appeared that a centralized Committee governed all the *Udāsī* establishments within its fold which was quite contrary to the written records available at the archives. For the better understanding and the functioning of the centres, it is important to understand its genesis and the affiliation. Many *Udāsī* institutions had largely come up during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Many of them were not associated with any of the *Udāsī* Orders called the *dhuans* or the *bakshishes*. Though some of them claimed spiritual ties with parental institutions but they all functioned independently.

Institutions not affiliated with any of the *Udāsī* Order, formed nearly half of the *Udāsī* institutions under Sikh rule. The *Mahant* managed all the affairs of the institution according to his liking or the conventions set up by his predecessors. He was the chief organizer, a spiritual guide of the disciples who visited the institution.

He had the sole authority to select and appoint his successor. The *Mahant* of the centre had to follow certain vows and obligations. Though, generally, he was supposed to remain celibate, but in the colonial period there are several cases of the married *chelas* and the *Mahants* too. Surprisingly, even, the women were found attached to the institutions much against the settled norm of celibacy. It was the duty of the *Mahant* to arrange funds for the institutions and to provide food, clothes and shelter to the inmates of the centre. He was supposed to manage *langar* regularly. Every *Udāsī* centre had its own *Mahant* with its *chelas*, *gurbhais* and other *sadhs* and attendants including musicians, *granthis*, cooks, and the menials. The *chela* was an important link between the *Mahant* and the followers visiting the centre. He also played an important role in collection of the funds, maintenance of the centre, to set up new centres and to spread the doctrine of the *Udāsīs*. *Sadh* was another important member of the institution after the *chela*, but the *sadhs* presence was found only in some institutions. They were largely the readers of the *Granth Sahib*. After the Akali-*Udāsī* conflict their number and importance in *Udāsī* establishments decreased. Some *Mahants* also managed *dawakhana*s nad *pathshalas* within the institution.

As per the organizational unity among the *Udāsīs* is concerned, it was found existing in name only. The use of word *Panth* for the *Udāsīs* implied that they had a common religious ideology and observed certain common beliefs and practices. Notwithstanding its spiritual affiliation to either a parent establishment or to a *dhuan* or to the *bakshish*, each *Udāsī* centre functioned independently in its administration, financial, religious and semi-religious affairs. The individual characteristic of an *Udāsī* institution, could be construed during the Akali-*Udāsī* conflict, when each *Udāsī Mahant* fought a lonely battle for the survival against the united Akali reformers.

## V

In their early history during the period of Sikh Rule, the *Udāsīs* showed great reverence for Baba Nanak and his followers, the Nanak Panthis, and the *Adi Granth*. The Practice of keeping the *Granth Sahib* in *Udāsī* institutions was common. But in the changed historical situation of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Udāsī Mahants* began to remove the Sikh scriptures from the centres in their custody. The *Udāsīs* had an exceptional regard for Baba Sri Chand and Baba Gurditta, who were believed to have passed on Guruship to the *adi-Udāsīs* : Almast, Balu Hasna, Goinda and Phul.

Notwithstanding their reverence for Guru Nanak and the *Adi Granth*, the *Udāsīs* did not believe in the orthodox Sikh doctrine of the spiritual unity of the ten Sikh Gurus or the unity of Guruship. They subscribed to the principle of gnosis. By implication, they believed that any *Udāsī* who ‘experienced’ God was as good as the Gurus. Moreover, the *Udāsīs* believed in monism and discarded the dual-Sikh doctrine of *Guru-Granth* and *Guru-panth*. Though the *Udāsīs*’s interpretation of Sikhism was Vedantic, yet they were not averse to the idea of the *Guru-Granth*, which helped the ruling classes more than the idea of the *Guru-Panth*.

In their initiation ceremony, the *Udāsīs* differed from the Sikhs. The novice was supposed to drink the water in which the toes of five *Udāsī Mahants* were washed; he was to follow the teachings of Baba Sri Chand and to wear *bhagvan* or salmon-coloured clothes. He was to avoid two temptations: gold and women. His name was changed, and the new name generally ended with *Das* or *Brahm*. At the end of the ceremony, the sweetmeat called *halva* was distributed among those present. At the time of initiation, if a novitiate was ordained a *Naga* or a named ascetic, he was given new name *Das* or *Sarana*, suffixes which were otherwise peculiar to the vaishnava *Bairagis*. If the initiation was for the *Paramahansa* variety, the disciple received a name which ends in *Ananda*. The *Udāsīs* wore clothes “*Shah, Sufaid, Zard, Surkhai, Jo Le Pahere so Gur Bhai*”.

In 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Udāsīs* worshipped the idol of Sri Chand and the *samadhs* of their *Mahants*, more instead of the *Adi-Granth*. The Hindu scriptures and the idols of Shiva or Vishnu began to be worshipped more. They also worshipped *charanpadika* and *Nishan Sahib*. The practice of worshipping the ball of ash (*gole di puja*) was popular among the *Udāsī* followers of Sangat Sahib and the *Nanga Udāsī* followers of Pritam Das. The *Udāsīs* recited some selected *chbandas* or couplets from their own *Satotar* or *Panch Parmeshar* immediately after their daily evening *Aarti* or the waving of the lamps, was over.

The *Nath* influence is plainly evident in some of the *Udāsī* ideas, customs and beliefs. They accorded a particular loyalty to the doctrines and practices of the *hatha-yoga*, although the respect for these doctrines extended beyond the limited *Udāsī* circle. The practice of constructing simple hearths (*dhuni*) was a *Nath* practice which had been appropriated by the *Udāsī sadhus* and subsequently the word *dhuan* was extended to designate *Udāsī* establishment. Significantly, the practice of *dhuni* or continuous smouldering fire was an integral feature of the earliest known *Udāsī*

centers termed as four *dhunas*. Their practice of *dhuni* or continuous fire and belief in the practice of *Hatha Yoga* clearly indicate their unorthodoxy. The *Udāsīs* did chant the *Kirtan Sohila*, the *Japuji* and the *Rehras* of the orthodox Sikhs; they chanted the *Matras* of Sri Chand and the various compositions of Kabir, Mira Bai and Sur Das. For the attainment of salvation, they advocated more keenly the Hindus ways, the *gyan*, the *karam* and the *bhakti Marg*.

## VI

The *Udāsī* literature consists of various forms such as the *Udāsī Matre*, the biographies of Baba Sri Chand; expositions of the *Bani* of the Sikh Gurus recorded in the *Adi-Granth*; the works on *Udāsī* doctrine and history; and the twentieth century *Udāsī* works which are highly polemical. Anand Ghan Udāsī's *teeke*(exposition) of the *bani* of Sikh Gurus are available and noteworthy. The *Udāsī Bodh* compiled by Sant Rein towards the end of Sikh rule, appears to be more significant than any other available *Udāsī* work, as it sheds light on the early 19<sup>th</sup> century self-image of the *Udāsīs* as well as their popular attitudes, beliefs and practices. The *Udāsī* works by Brahmanad Udāsīn and Pritam Das Nirban written in 1920s significantly show their changing interests and attitudes as well their laxity in the observances of various beliefs and practices.

The *Udāsī* literature may be divided into two major sections; the first consisting of the compositions of Baba Sri Chand and others written during the eighteenth century; and the second covers the works of the nineteenth and twentieth century writers which clearly reflect the change in *Udāsīs* interests and attitudes in the changing historical situation. The *Udāsī* literature depicts social customs, practices, religious beliefs, cultural and traditional conflicts in the society. Some of the *Udāsī* writers like Sant Rein have condemned the prevalence of social evils in the contemporary society and hence suggested ways to improve the plight of mankind.

Some of the *Udāsī* poets were considerate towards women, while others condemned them. Leaving aside a few *Padas* of Brahmanand and Gopal Das, generally the other *Udāsī* poets had presented a women as beautiful, kind, and pious human being. But, many *Udāsī* poets have ignored '*Shingar Ras*', which magnified the beauty of women. The *Udāsī* literature clearly reflects the areas and the colloquial script used by the writers to express their feelings. As a result, we come across, the

use of multilingual script, in the writings of the *Udāsīs* such as *Sanskrit*, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujrati, *Braj*, Haryanvi, and *Bhojpuri*.

In the political sphere, the contribution of the *Udāsī* poets is appreciable. Many *Udāsī* poets were influenced by the spirit of Nationalism. Through their writings, they inculcated the feeling of patriotism among the people. Many of them openly condemned British Administration for its corrupt practices and misrule.

## VII

The *Udāsī Mahants* of the various *Gurdwaras* once rendered important service to the Sikh religion and Sikh community. The *Udāsī sadhs* were generally well respected as men of high moral character and integrity before the advent of the British. They were well versed in the Sikh scriptures and devoted themselves chiefly to reciting and expounding the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. Many of them established institutions, admitted *chelas* or followers and became heads of the *deras*, the *akharas* and the *Gurdwaras* as *Mahants*. The easy flow of money, revenue-free *jagirs*, given by the Sikh *Misaldars* and later by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors, all brought a change in the style of living of some of the *Mahants*. They gradually adopted all sorts of corruption and vices. Idols were placed in various *Gurdwaras* and their worship was becoming contrary to the principles of the Sikh faith.

The Akali reformers wanted to turn the *Udāsī Mahants* out of their prestigious Sikh Shrines as they had turned these institutions into their personal properties. The increasing political consciousness and response to Nationalist upsurge throughout the country created an awakening among the people in the Punjab and also the desire among the Sikhs to reform their shrines. The Singh Sabha movement and the Chief Khalsa Diwan promoted self-consciousness and sense of independent identity among the Sikhs. Initiative for the reform was also taken by the Punjabi newspapers like the *Khalsa Advocate*, the *Khalsa Samachar*, the *Khalsa Sewak* and the *Punjab*, which began complaining about the mis-management of the Golden Temple at Amritsar and several other important Sikh Shrines at different places. The Gurdwara Reform Movement created a sense of confidence among the Indians that the British could be forced to meet their genuine demands through non-violent mass movement. It brought the Akali Dal and the Congress leadership very close to each other, giving a great impetus to the freedom movement in Punjab. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak

Committee and the Akali Dal provided the institutional and organizational structure to respond to the aspirations of the newly mobilized Sikh masses. In the course of their struggle, these two bodies were not only able to obtain control over many important Sikh shrines through peaceful agitation and passive sufferings, but also to strengthen the forces of nationalism in the Punjab by ejecting the *Mahants*, the government appointed managers (*Sarbrahs*) and other vested interests in the Sikh communities. The *Udāsīs* in retaliation had to wage a long legal battle against the Akalis in order to save the institutions under their control. As the important Sikh shrines were being taken over by the Akalis, the *Mahants* of many smaller institutions either voluntarily submitted to the authority of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee or were made to surrender their shrines and properties attached with them under provisions of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of July 1925.

## VIII

During the period of first seventy years from 1849 to early 1920's, the *Udāsīs* witnessed considerable change in their position from all angles partly perhaps due to the impact of the Singh Sabha ideology and partly due to the direct confrontation between the *Udāsī Mahants* and Akali reformers during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the Akali-*Udāsī* attempts both through courts and their literature, to prove the Sikh or non-Sikh identity or status of several institutions once under the *Udāsī Mahants*, further aggravated the situation, thus, affecting both the numerical strength of the *Udāsīs* that considerably decreased as well as the number of *Udāsī* centres that was either deflated or inflated by the *Udāsī* and Sikh writers due to their subjectivity. This may further be explained with reference to the change in the administration and the new rulers policy of partial withdrawal of the revenue-free land grants of the *Udāsīs*, the dilatory court cases or the civil suits, and finally, the *Udāsīs*'s attempts to assert their Hindu identity in the Census Reports as well. Thus, the resumption of State Patronage, the rise of Singh Sabhas, the Akali-*Udāsī* conflict and the Gurdwara Reform Movement and the *Gurdwara* litigation and legislation served a serious setback to the *Udāsīs* who started sending petitions to the British Government authorities requesting them to consider them as Hindus and not Sikhs.

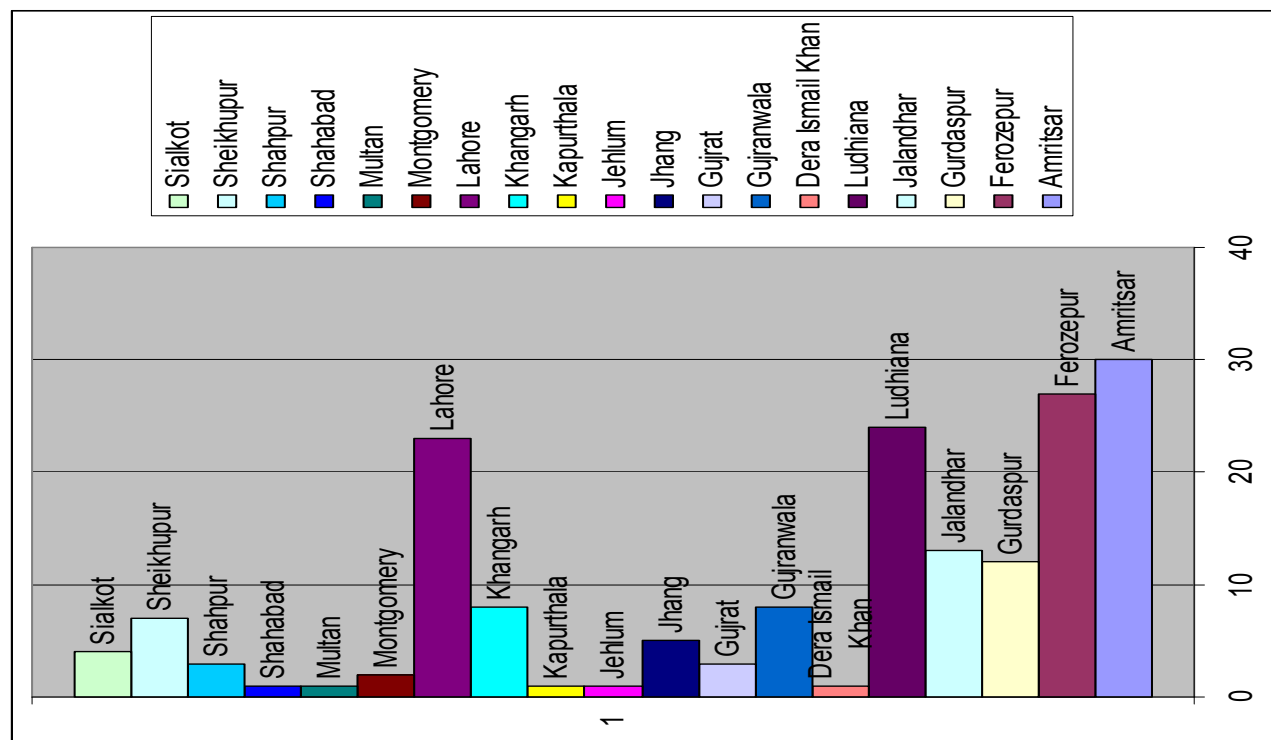
With a view to the overall position of the *Udāsīs* in the colonial Punjab and their importance in the contemporary situation, W. H. Mcleod, in the last decade of

20<sup>th</sup> the century, regarded them merely as ‘historic rather than contemporary’ and more so, as ‘the palest shadow of their earlier wealth and power’. My analysis and findings in regard to the comparative state of affairs of the *Udāsīs* in the pre-colonial and colonial Punjab also indicate and imply, more of less, the same impression as has been well stated by an eminent western scholar of the Sikh studies. Under the new rulers, the *Udāsīs* witnessed a considerable change in their attitude towards the Sikhs and their scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, as well as in their numerical strength, their state patronage and the number of their centres with some laxity in their beliefs and practices, such as renunciation and asceticism.



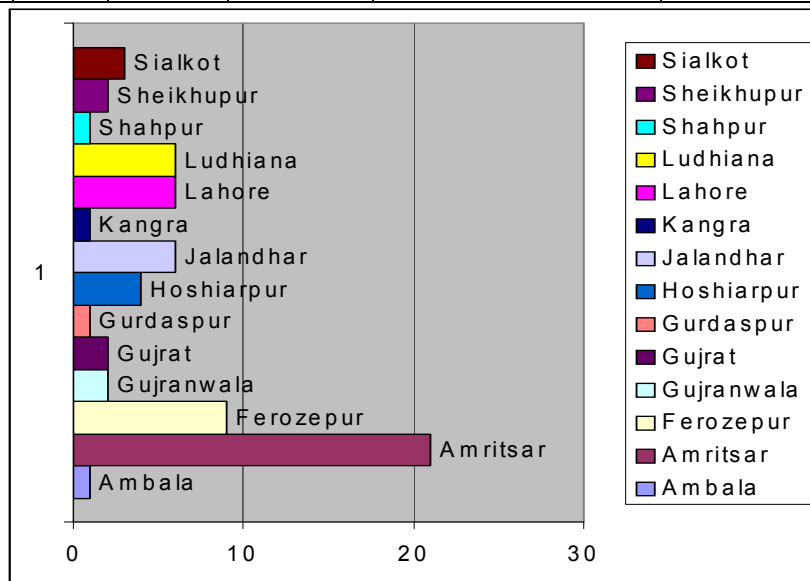
**LIST OF UDĀSĪ ESTABLISHMENTS BASED ON BRITISH SOURCES (PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED)**

Sr. No	Based on early British Sources	Dharmasala	Akhara	Dera	Shrine	Asthan	Thakardwara	Gurdwara	Temple	Samadh	Darbar	Other	Total
1.	Amritsar	11	13	1		1		3		1			30
2.	Ferozepur	25							1			1	27
3.	Gurdaspur	5	1	2	2		2						12
4.	Jalandhar	12			1								13
5.	Ludhiana	24											24
6.	Dera Ismail Khan	1											1
7.	Gujranwala	4	1						1	1	1		8
8.	Gujrat	1	1			1							3
9.	Jhang	5											5
10.	Jehlum									1			1
11.	Kapurthala		1										1
12.	Khengarh	8											8
13.	Lahore	11	1	8					1	1		1	23
14.	Montgomery	1		1									2
15.	Multan	1											1
16.	Shahabad	1											1
17.	Shahpur	3											3
18.	Sheikhupur	4									3		7
19.	Sialkot	2									2		4
	total	119	18	12	3	2	2	3	3	4	6	2	174



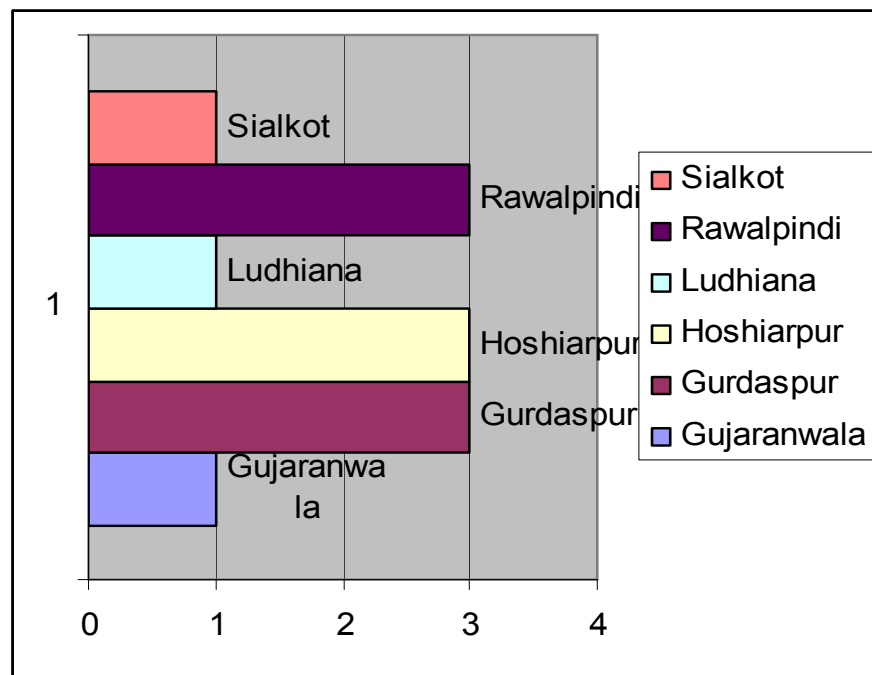
**LIST OF UDĀSĪ ESTABLISHMENTS BASED ON PANDA VAHIS**

Sr. No	Based on Panda Vahis	Dharmsala	Akhara	Dera	Shrine	Asthan	Thakar Dwara	Gurdwara	Temple	Samadh	Darbar	Other	Total
1.	Ambala	1											1
2.	Amritsar	21											21
3.	Ferozepur	9											9
4.	Gujranwala	2											2
5.	Gujrat	2											2
6.	Gurdaspur	1											1
7.	Hoshiarpur	4											4
8.	Jalandhar	6											6
9.	Kangra	1											1
10.	Lahore	5		1									6
11.	Ludhiana	6											6
12.	Shahpur	1											1
13.	Sheikhupur	2											2
14.	Sialkot	2		1									3
	Total	63		2									65



**LIST OF UDĀSĪ ESTABLISHMENTS BASED ON OTHER SOURCES**

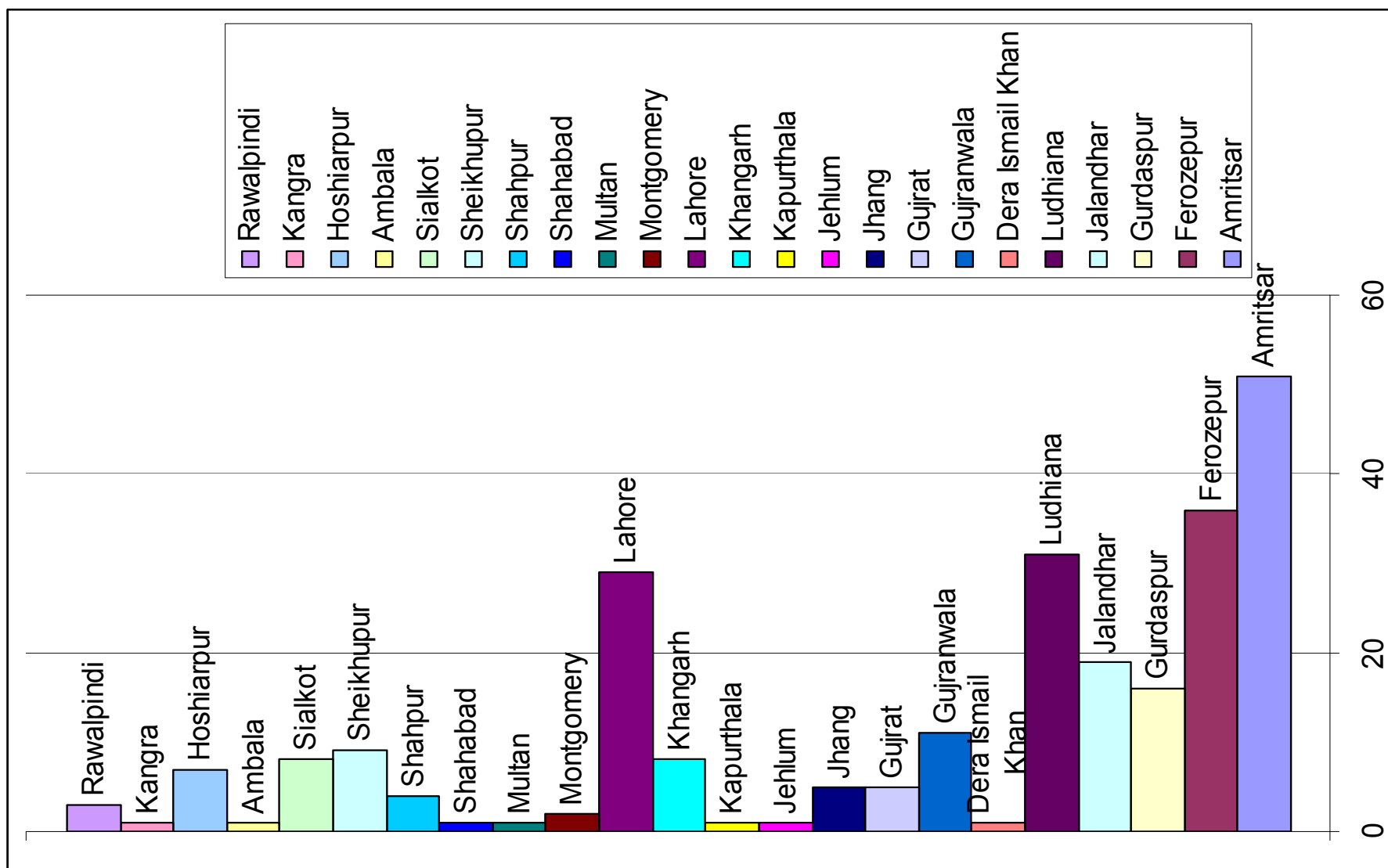
Sr. no.	Based on Other Sources	<i>Dharmsala</i>	<i>Akhara</i>	<i>Dera</i>	Shrine	<i>Asthan</i>	<i>Thakardwara</i>	<i>Gur-dwara</i>	Temple	<i>Samadh</i>	<i>Darbar</i>	Other	Total
1	Gujaranwala		1										1
2	Gurdaspur	2		1									3
3	Hoshiarpur			1	2								3
4	Ludhiana											1	1
5	Rawalpindi	3											3
6	Sialkot											1	1
	Total	5	1	2	2							2	12



**LIST OF UDĀSĪ ESTABLISHMENTS BASED ON BRITISH RECORDS, PANDA VAHIS AND OTHER SOURCES**

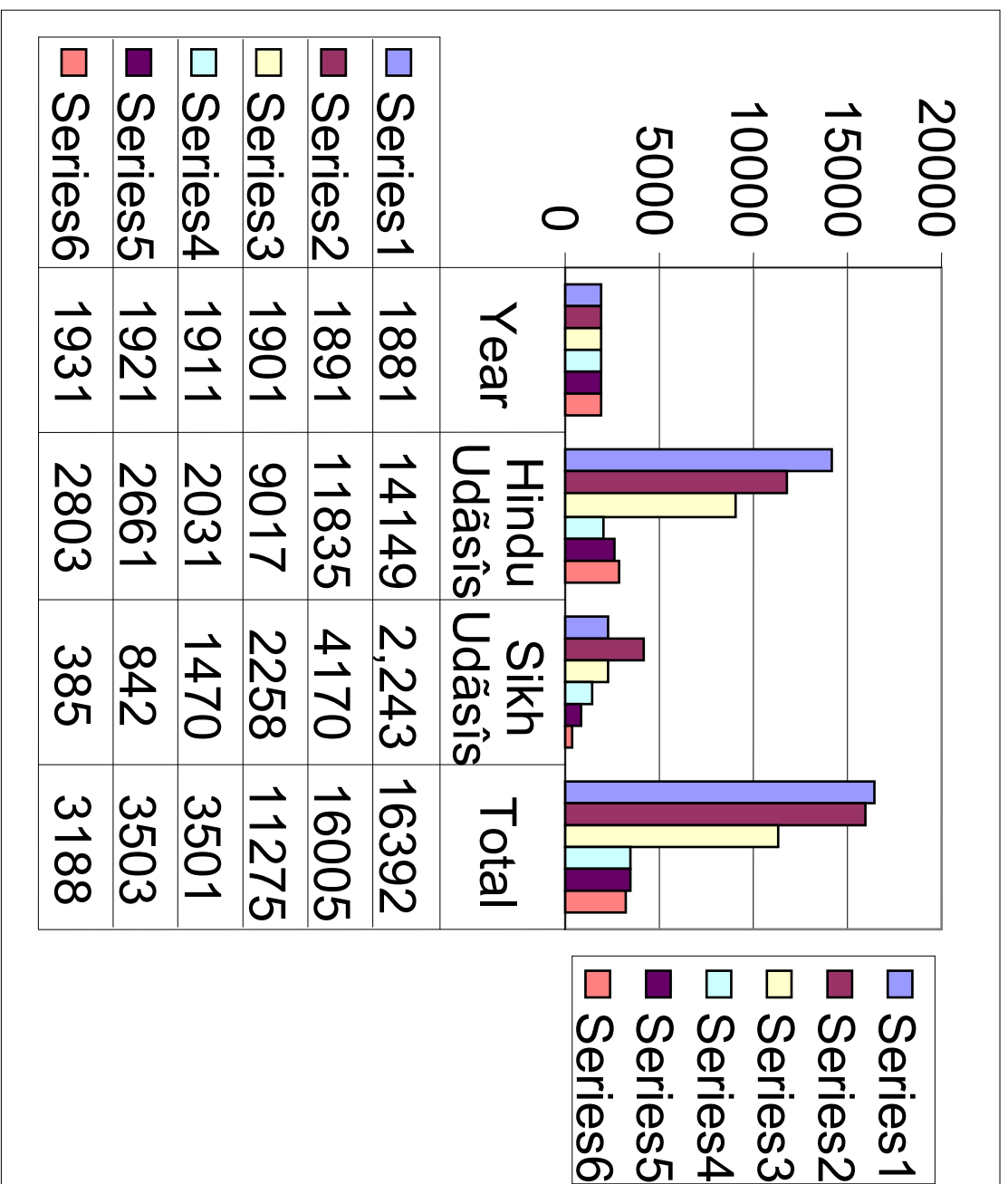
Sr. No	Based on British Documents, Panda Records and Other Sources	<i>Dharmsala</i>	<i>Akhara</i>	<i>Dera</i>	Shrine	<i>Asthan</i>	<i>Thakar Dwara</i>	<i>Gurdwara</i>	Temple	<i>Samadh</i>	<i>Darbar</i>	Other	Total
1.	Amritsar	11+21+0=32	13+0+0	1+0+0		1+0+0		3+0+0		1+0+0			51
2.	Ferozepur	25+9+0=34							1+0+0			1+0+0	36
3.	Gurdaspur	5+1+2=8	1+0+0	2+0+1	2+0+0		2+0+0						16
4.	Jalandhar	12+6+0=18			1+0+0								19
5.	Ludhiana	24+6+0=30										0+0+1	31
6.	Dera Ismail Khan	1+0+0=1											1
7.	Gujranwala	4+2+0=6	1+0+1						1+0+0	1+0+0	1+0+0		11
8.	Gujrat	1+2+0=3	1+0+0			1+0+0							5
9.	Jhang	5+0+0=5											5
10.	Jehlum	0+0+0=0								1+0+0			1
11.	Kapurthala	0+0+0=0	1+0+0										1
12.	Khangarh	8+0+0=8											8
13.	Lahore	11+5+0=16	1+0+0	8+1+0					1+0+0	1+0+0		1+0+0	29
14.	Montgomery	1+0+0=1		1+0+0									2
15.	Multan	1+0+0=1											1
16.	Shahabad	1+0+0=1											1
17.	Shahpur	3+1+0=4											4
18.	Sheikhupur	4+2+0=6									3+0+0		9
19.	Sialkot	2+2+0=4		0+0+1							2+0+0	0+0+1	8
20.	Ambala	0+1+0=1											1
21.	Hoshiarpur	0+4+0=4		0+0+1	0+0+2								7
22.	Kangra	0+1+0=1											1
23.	Rawalpindi	0+3+0=3											3
		187	19	16	5	2	2	3	3	4	6	4	251

**LIST OF UDĀSĪ ESTABLISHMENTS BASED ON BRITISH RECORDS, PANDA VAHIS AND OTHER SOURCES**



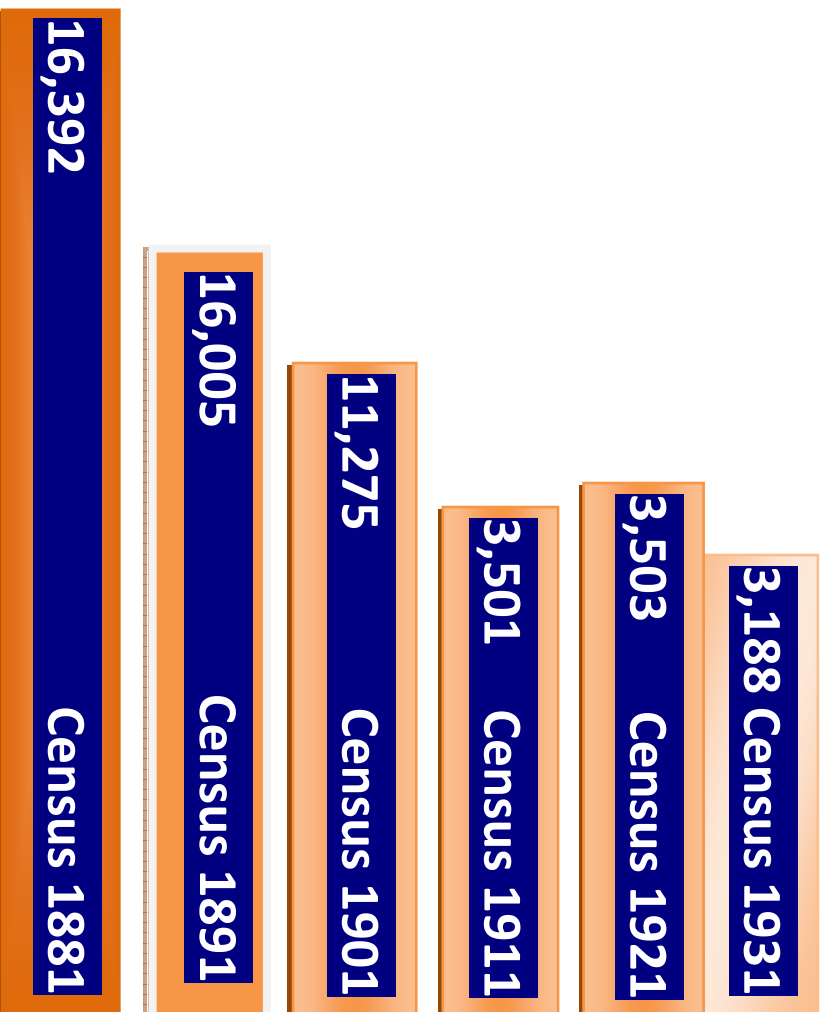
# CENSUS DATA ON THE *UDĀSĪS* FROM 1881 TO 1931

Years	1881			1891			1901			1911			1921			1931		
	M	F	Total	Cast	sect	Total	M	F	Total			Total		Total				Total
Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i>	10,999	3,150	<b>14,149</b>	11,817	18	<b>11,835</b>	7154	1863	9017	2031		<b>2031</b>	2661		<b>2661</b>	2803		<b>2803</b>
Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i>	1,578	665	<b>2,243</b>	3173	997	<b>4170</b>	1756	502	2258	879 kesh	591 sahaj	<b>1470</b>	776 kesh	66 sahaj	<b>842</b>	16 kesh	369 sahaj	<b>385</b>
Total	12,577	3,815	<b>16,392</b>	14,990	1,015	<b>16005</b>	8,910	2,365	<b>11275</b>			<b>3501</b>			<b>3503</b>			<b>3188</b>



## NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF THE *UDĀSĪS*

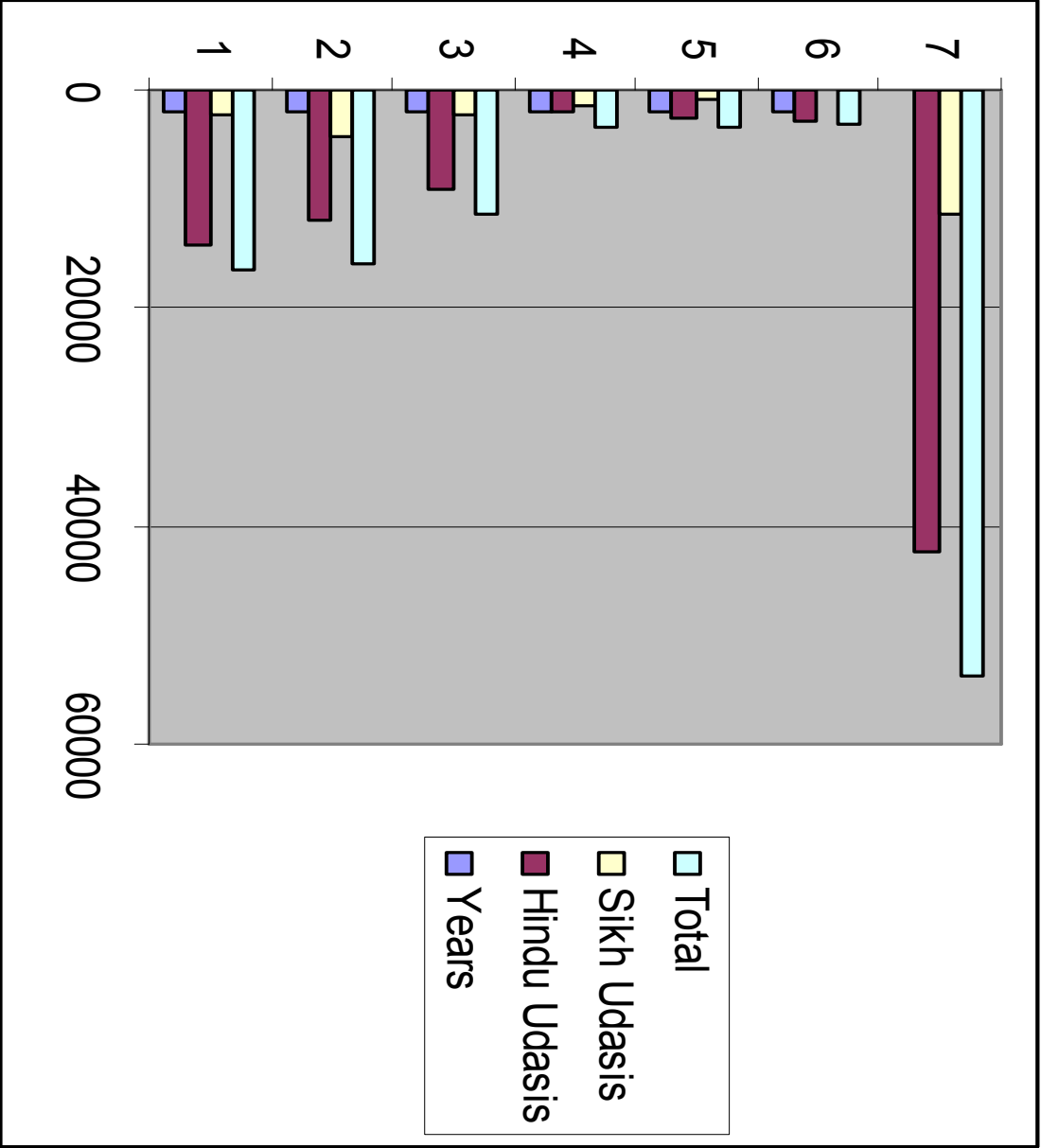
FROM 1881 TO 1931





**A VIEW OF THE *UDĀSĪS* ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS RECORDS**

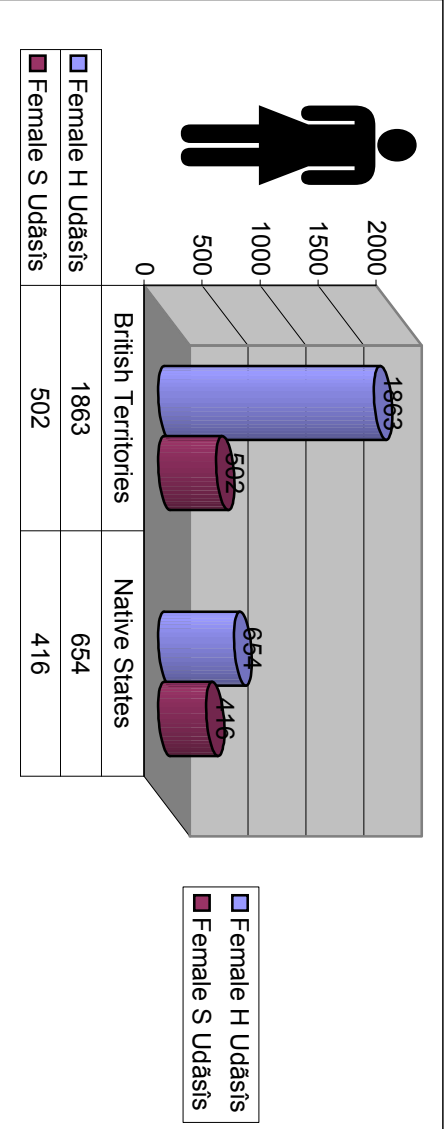
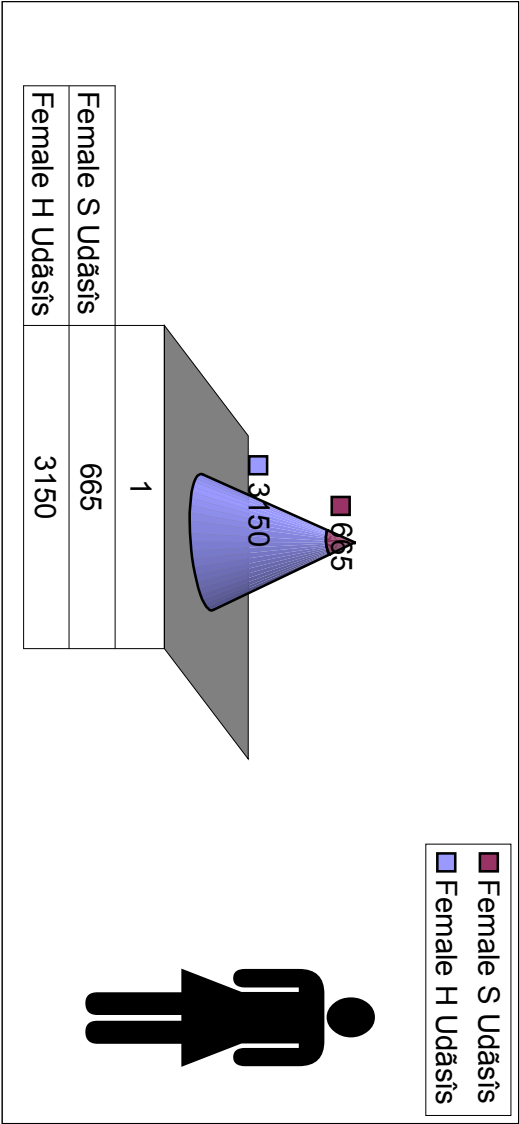
Years	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	Total
<b>Hindu <i>Udāsīs</i></b>	14,149	11,835	9017	2031	2661	2803	<b>42,496</b>
<b>Sikh <i>Udāsīs</i></b>	2,243	4170	2258	1470	842	385	<b>11,368</b>
<b>Total</b>	16,392	16,005	11,275	3,501	3,503	3,188	<b>53,864</b>



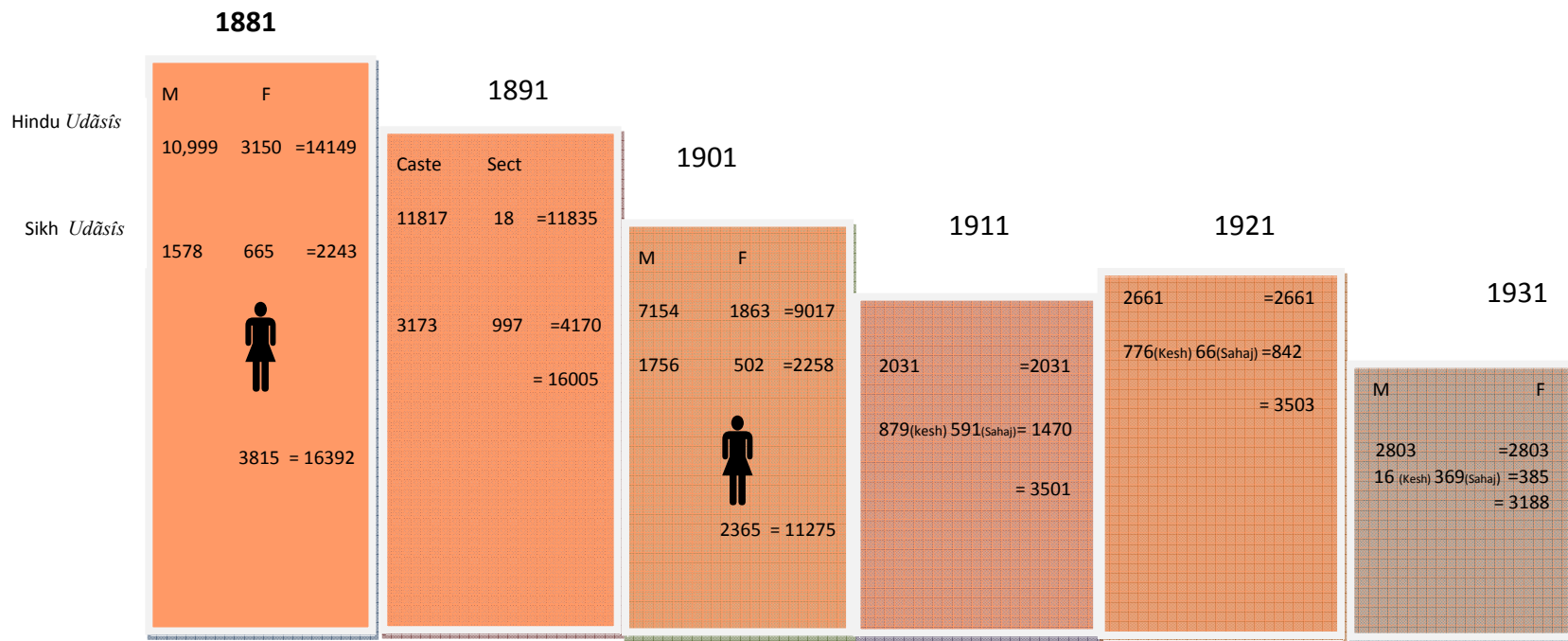
CENSUS DATA ON HINDU AND SIKH FEMALE UDĀSĪS  
BETWEEN THE YEARS FROM 1881-1901

1881

	British Territories
Female H <i>Udāsīs</i>	3150
Female S <i>Udāsīs</i>	665
Total	3,815



## DECLINE IN NUMBERS OF THE *UDĀSĪS* FROM 1881 TO 1931



## APPENDIX I

### ਮਾਤ੍ਰੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ

ਕਹੁਰੇ ਬਾਲ ਕਿਨ ਮੁੰਡਿਆ, ਕਿਨ ਮੁੰਡਾਇਆ ।।  
ਕਿਸ ਕਾ ਭੇਜਿਆ, ਨਗਰੀ ਆਇਆ ।।  
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੁੰਡਿਆ, ਲੇਖ ਮੁੰਡਾਇਆ ।  
ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਭੇਜਿਆ, ਨਗਰੀ ਆਇਆ ।

ਚੇਤੋ ਨਗਰੀ, ਤਾਰੋ ਗਾਮ ।  
ਅਲਖ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਾ, ਸਿਮਰੋ ਨਾਮ ।।

ੴ ਗੁਰ ਅਵਨਾਸੀ ਖੋਲ ਰਚਾਇਆ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਅਗਮ ਨਿਗਮ ਕਾ ਪੰਥ ਬਤਾਇਆ ।। 1 ।।

ਗਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਗੋਦਤੀ ਖਿਮਾਂ ਕੀ ਟੋਪੀ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਜਤ ਦਾ ਆੜਬੰਦ ਸ਼ੀਲ ਲੰਗੀਟੀ ।। 2 ।।

ਅਕਾਲ ਖੰਭਾ ਨਿਰਾਸ ਝੋਲੀ- । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਜੁਗਤ ਕਾ ਟੋਪ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਬੋਲੀ ।। 3 ।।

ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਚੋਲਾ ਸਤ ਕੀ ਸੋਲੀ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਮਰਯਾਦ ਮੇਖਲੀ ਲੈ ਗਲੇ ਮੇਲੀ ।। 4 ।।

ਧਿਆਨ ਕਾ ਬਣੁਆ ਨਿਰਤ ਕਾ ਸੂਈ ਦਾਨ । (f. ੫੧੬)  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅੰਚਲਾ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਸੁਜਾਨ ।। 5 ।।

ਬਹੁ ਰੰਗ ਮੋਰ ਛੜ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਦਿਸ਼ਟੀ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਨਿਰਭਉ ਜੰਗ ਡੋਰਾ ਨਾ ਕੋ ਦੁਸ਼ਟੀ ।। 6 ।।

ਜਾਪ ਜੰਗੋਟਾ ਸਿਫਤ ਉਡਾਨੀ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਸਿੰਝੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਗੁਰੂਬਾਣੀ ।। 7 ।।

ਸ਼ਰਮ ਕੀ ਮੁੰਦ੍ਰਾ, ਸ਼ਿਵ ਵਿਭੂਤਾ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਾਨੀ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੂਤਾ ।। 8 ।।

ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸੂਤ ਵਿਵੇਕ ਧਾਗੇ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਅਨੇਕ ਟੱਲੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਲਾਗੇ ।। 9 ।।

ਸੁਰਤ ਕੀ ਸੂਈ ਲੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੀਵੇ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਜੋ ਰਾਖੇ ਸੋ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਥੀਵੇ ।। 10 ।।

ਸਾਹ ਸੁਪੈਦ, ਜ਼ਰਦ ਸੁਰਖਾਈ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਜੋ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਭਾਈ ।। 11 ।।

ਤ੍ਰੈਗੁਣ ਚਕਮਕ ਅਗਨ ਮਥ ਪਾਈ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਧੂਣੀ ਦੇਹ ਜਲਾਈ ।। 12 ।।

ਸੰਜਮ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਧਾਰੀ । (f. ੫੧੭)

ਚਰਨ ਕੰਵਲ ਮਹਿ ਸੁਰਤ ਹਮਾਰੀ ॥ 13 ॥

ਭਾਉ ਭੋਜਨ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕਰ ਪਾਇਆ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਭਲਾ ਬੁਰਾ ਨਹੀ ਮੰਨ ਵਸਾਇਆ ॥ 14 ॥

ਪਾਤਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਫਰੂਆ ਬਹੁ ਗੁਣਾ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਕਰਮੰਡਲ ਤੂੰਬਾ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਘਣਾ ॥ 15 ॥

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਉਦਿਕ ਮਨ ਦਇਆ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਜੋ ਜੀਵੇ ਸੋ ਸੀਤਲ ਭਇਆ ॥ 16 ॥

ਇੜਾ ਸੇ ਆਵੈ ਪਿੰਗਲਾ ਮੈਂ ਪਾਵੇ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਸੁਖਮਨਾ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਸਹਿਜ ਸਮਾਵੇ ॥ 17 ॥

ਨਿਰਾਸ ਮਨ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਧਿਆਨ । (f. ੫੧੭)  
ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਗਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਪਕ ਗਿਆਨ ॥ 18 ॥

ਅਸਿਬਰ ਰਿਧ ਅਮਰਪਦ ਦੰਡਾ ॥ (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਧੀਰਜ ਫਹੁੜੀ ਤਪ ਕਰ ਖੰਡਾ ॥ 19 ॥

ਵਸ ਕਰ ਆਸਾ ਸਮ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਚੋਗਾਨ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਹਰਥ ਸੋਗ ਮਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਨ ॥ 20 ॥

ਸਹਿਜ ਵੈਰਾਗੀ ਕਰੇ ਵੈਰਾਗ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਮਾਯਾ ਮੋਹਣੀ ਸਗਲ ਤਿਆਗ ॥ 21 ॥

ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਪਾਖਰ ਪਵਨ ਕਾ ਘੋੜਾ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਨਿਹ ਕਰਮ ਜੀਨ ਤਤ ਕਾ ਜੋੜਾ ॥ 22 ॥

ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਢਾਲ ਗੁਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਕਮਾਨ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਅਕਲ ਸੰਜੋਧ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੇ ਬਾਨ ॥ 23 ॥

ਅਕਲ ਕੀ ਬਰਛ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਕੀ ਕਟਾਰੀ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਮਨ ਕੋ ਮਾਰ ਅਸਵਾਰੀ ॥ 24 ॥

ਬਿਖਮ ਗੜ ਤੋੜ ਨਿਹਭਉ ਘਰ ਆਵੇ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਨੋਬਤ ਸੰਖ ਨਗਾਰਾ ਵਾਵੇ ॥ 25 ॥

ਗੁਰ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ਸੂਖਮ ਵੇਦ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਨਿਰਬਾਣ ਵਿਦਿਯਾ ਆਪਰ ਭੇਦ ॥ 26 ॥

ਅਖੰਡ ਜਨੇਊ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਧੋਤੀ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਸੋਹੰ ਜਾਪ ਸਚ ਮਾਲ ਪਰੋਤੀ ॥ 27 ॥

ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਮੰਤਰ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਨਾਮ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਨਿਸਚਲ ਆਸਨ ਕਰ ਬਿਸਰਾਮ ॥ 28 ॥

ਤਿਲਕ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਤਰਪਣ ਜਸ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਪੂਜਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭੋਗ ਮਹਾ ਰਸ ॥ 29 ॥

ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਸੰਧਿਆ ਦਰਸਨ ਛਾਪਾ । (f. ੫੧੮)  
ਵਾਦ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਮਿਟਾਵੇ ਆਪਾ ॥ 30 ॥

ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਪੀਤਾਂਬਰ ਮਨ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਸ਼ਾਲਾ (f. ੫੧੮, f. ੫੧੯)  
ਚੀਤ ਚਿਤਾਂਬਰ ਰੁਣ ਝੁਣ ਮਾਲਾ ॥ 31 ॥

ਬੁੱਧ ਬਾਘੰਬਰ ਕੁਲਾ ਪੋਸਤੀਨ । (f. ੫੧੯)  
ਖੋਸ ਖੜਾਵਾ ਏਹ ਤ ਲੀਨ ॥ 32 ॥

ਤੋੜਾ ਚੂਰਾ ਔਰ ਜੰਜੀਰ । (f. ੫੧੯)  
ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਫਕੀਰ ॥ 33 ॥

ਜਟਾ ਜੂਟ ਮੁਕਟ ਸਿਰ ਹੋਇ। (f. ੫੧੯)  
ਮੁਕਤਾ ਫਿਰੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੋਇ ॥ 34 ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਪੂਤਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਬੋਲੇ (f. ੫੧੯)  
ਜੁਗਤ ਪਛਾਣੇ ਤਤਿ ਵਿਰੋਲੇ ॥ 35 ॥

ਐਸੀ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਲੈ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਕੋਇ । (f. ੫੧੯)  
ਆਵਾ ਗਵਨ ਮਿਟਾਵੇ ਸੋਇ ॥ 36 ॥

## APPENDIX II

### CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS CONNECTED WITH GURDWARA REFORM MOVEMENT

12 October 1920	Golden Temple and the Akal Takhat come under the Akali control
15 November 1920	General Assembly of the Sikhs to elect the SGPC
16 November 1920	The SGPC comes into existence
19 November 1920	Gurdwara Panja Sahib (Hasan Abdal) comes under Akali control
14 December 1920	Shromani Akali Dal established
20 January 1921	Durbar Sahib Taran Taran comes under akali control
20 February 1921	Bhai Lachhman Singh's Jatha reached Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana. Tragedy of Nankana
21 February 1921	Janam Asthan and other Gurdwaras at Nankana come under Panthic control
1 March 1921	Maulana Shaukat Ali and other nationalist leaders attend the Shahidi Diwan at Nankana
3 March 1921	Mahatma Gandhi addresses a Shahidi Diwan at Nankana and calls upon the Sikhs to adopt non-cooperation.
21 March 1921	Babbar Akali Movement Begins
5 April 1921	First Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrines Bill introduced in the Punjab Legislative Council
11 May 1921	The Akali Leadership passes a formal resolution in favour of non-cooperation
29 October 1921	Keys of the Toshakhana of Golden Temple Amritsar taken away by the Government official
11 November 1921	Protest meetings against the official action in taking over the keys
26 November 1921	Arrests of the Akali leaders over the issue of the keys.
17 January 1922	Government unconditionally releases the Akali leaders and others arrested in connection with the keys agitation
18 January 1922	A Gazetted officer delivers the keys to Baba Kharak Singh at a specially arranged diwan at Akal Takhat, Amritsar.
9 August 1922	Arrest of the Akalis at Guru Ka Bagh

22 August 1922	Guru ka bagh morcha begins
10 September 1922	Hakim Ajmal Khan, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other national leaders address the Akali Diwan at Amritsar
12 September 1922	Rev. C.F Andrews visits Guru Ka Bagh
7 November 1922	Punjab Governor, sir Edward Maclagan, and other officials visit Guru Ka Bagh
23 April 1923	Unconditional release of the Akalis arrested in connection with the Guru ka Bagh morcha
9 July 1923	Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha forced to abdicate his throne
4 August 1923	S.G.P.C. general body decides to take up the Nabha issue.
27 August 1923	Arrest of the Akalis at Jaito
25 September 1923	Jawaharlal Nehru, A.T Gidwani and K Santhanam arrested at Nabha
29 September 1923	Jaito Morcha begins
12 October 1923	Punjab Government passes an order declaring the Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, the Shromani Akali Dal and the various Jathas affiliated to them as unlawful
31 December 1923	Indian National Congress passes formal resolution supporting the Akali agitation at Nabha at its annual session at Cocanada.
21 February 1924	Firing at the Shahidi Jatha at Jaito
11 April 1924	Birdwood committee announced by the Government
2 June 1924	Birdwood Committee announces its failure
28 Feb 1925	Six Babbar Akalis sentenced to death
7 July 1925	Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrines Bill passed by the Punjab Legi. Council
28 July 1925	The Gurdwara Bill gets the approval of the Governor General
6 August 1925	Completion of 101 Akahd Paths at Jaito and Terminatin of the Akali Movement Sardar Teja Singh Samundri dies in jail
1 November 1925	The Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrines Act Enforced.



## APPENDIX III

### SHRINES RECOGNIZED AS SIKH GURDWARAS ACCORDING TO THE SIKH GURDWARAS ACT OF 1925

#### **SCHEDULE – I** (See Section 3 and 80)

Sr. No.	District	Tehsil	Revenue Estate	Name of Gurdwara	Constituencies for election of committee of Management
1	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Janam Asthan Guru Ram Das Ji	As prescribed in section 95
2	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Dera Sahib	"
3	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Baoki Sahib	"
4	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Lal Khuhi	"
5	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Pahli Padshahi	"
6	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Chhevin Padshahi	"
7	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Shahid Ganj Bhai Taru Singh	"
8	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Shahid Ganj Bhai Mani Singh	"
9	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Diwan Khana (Excluding shrine of Lali devi)	"
10	Lahore	Lahore	Lahore City	Budhu Awa	"
11	Lahore	Lahore	Muzang	Chhevin Padhhahi	"
12	Lahore	Lahore	Hudiara	Hudiara	Zail Jahman
13	Lahore	Lahore	Padhana	Padhana	Revenue estate of Padhana
14	Lahore	Lahore	Dhilwan	Dhilwan	Revenue estate of dhilwan
15	Lahore	Lahore	Ghawindi	Ghawindi	Revenue estate of Ghawind and Ghawindi
16	Lahore	Lahore	Kamas	Kamas	Zails of Rangilpur, Jodhdhir and Badoke
17	Lahore	Lahore	Chaihal	Chaihal	Revenue estate of Chaihal and Kurbath
18	Lahore	Lahore	Kanganpur	Kanganpur	Revenue Estate of Kanganpur
19	Lahore	Lahore	Manga	Manga	Zails of Ramgilpur, Jodhdhir and Badoke
20	Lahore	Lahore	Guru mangat	Guru Mangat	Revenue estate of Mangat
21	Lahore	Lahore	Amar Sidhu	Amar Sidhu	Revenue estate of Amar Sidhu
22	Lahore	Lahore	Kahna	Kahna	Zail of Kahna
23	Lahore	Kasur	Rattoki	Rattoki	Revenue estates of Rattoki, Gujjal, Asal, Uttar and Waltaha
24	Lahore	Chunian	Jhambar Kalan	Jhambar Kalan	Revenue estates of Jhambar Kalan, Jhambar Khurd and Khanki Maur
25	Lahore	Chunian	Bhai Pheru	Bhai Pheru	Tehsil of chunian
26	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Shri Harmandir sahib (Darbar Sahib)	As Prescribed in Section 85
27	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akal Takhat Sahib	"
28	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Baba Atal Sahib	"
29	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Kaulsar and Mai Kaulan da Asthan	"
30	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Ram Sar	"

31	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Bibeksar	”
32	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Tahli Sahib with Santokh Sar	”
33	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Churasti Atari	”
34	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Guru Ke Maihl	”
35	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Lohgarh	”
36	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Thara Sahib	”
37	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Pipli Sahib	”
38	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Chhawani Nahangan	”
39	Amritsar	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Shahid Ganj Baba Dip Singh Ji	”
40	Amritsar	Amritsar	Chabba	Sangrana Sahib	”
41	Amritsar	Amritsar	Chabba	Walla Sahib	Zail of Verka (Excluding Amritsar Municipal Area)
42	Amritsar	Amritsar	Baba Bakala	Baba Bakala	The Police Station of Beas
43	Amritsar	Amritsar	Chabba	Chabba	Revenue Estate of Chabba
44	Amritsar	Amritsar	Wadali Guru	Guru Ki Wadali	Zail of Chabba
45	Amritsar	Amritsar	Wadali Guru	Chherta Sahib	Zail of Chabba
46	Amritsar	Amritsar	Main Randhawa	Udoke	Revenue Estates of Udoke and Mian Randhawa
47	Amritsar	Amritsar	Sultan Wind	Damdama Sahib	Revenue Estate of Saltanwind
48	Amritsar	Amritsar	Verka	Nanak Sar	Revenue Estate of Verka
49	Amritsar	Taran Taran	Khara	Dukh Niwaran	Revenue estate of Thathi and Khara
50	Amritsar	Taran Taran	Taran Taran	Shri Darbar Sahib	As prescribed in Section 85
51	Amritsar	”	Naurangabad	Gurdwara Baba Bir Singh Ji	Zail of Rasulpur
52	Amritsar	”	Khadur Sahib	Shri Darbar Sahib Khadur Sahib	Revenue estate of Khadur Sahib
53	Amritsar	”	Goindwal	Baoli Sahib	Revenue estate of Goindwal
54	Amritsar	”	Chabbal Kalan	Bibi Wiro Ji da Asthan	Revenue Estate of Chabbal Kalan
55	Amritsar	”	Chhabri	Chhabri Sahib	Revenue estate of Khan Chhabri, Jama Rai and Fatehabad
56	Amritsar	”	Sarhali Kalan	Chobacha Sahib	Police Station Area of Sarhali
57	Amritsar	”	Chohla	Chohala Sahib	Police St. area of Sarhali
58	Amritsar	”	Baserke	Baserke	Zail of Kasel
59	Amritsar	”	Gaggo Buha	Gaggo Buha	Revenue estate of Gaggo Buha
60	Amritsar	”	Hoshiarnagar	Guru Sai Satiani	Zails of Chicha, Gumtala, Attari, Chabba and Kasel
61	Amritsar	”	Thatha	Bir Sahib	Zail of Panjwar
62	Amritsar	”	Lohar	Dera Sahib	Revenue Estate of Lohar and Jam
63	Amritsar	Ajnala	Ghokewali	Guru ka Bagh	Tehsil Ajnala
64	Amritsar	”	Dalla	Dalla Kiralgarh	Zail of Chawinda
65	Amritsar	”	Madhoke and Barar	Madhoke Barar	Revenue estate of Madhoke and Barar
66	Amritsar	”	Ram Das	Ram Das	Police St. Area of Ram das and Ajnala
67	Amritsar	”	Jandiala	Mailh Jandiala	Revenue Estate of Jandiala
68	Gurdaspur	Batala	Batala	Dera Sahib	Zail of Batala

69	Gurdaspur	Batala	Salho Chahal	Achal Sahib Gurdwara Excluding Shiwala talab kalan and Shiwala Bhandarian)	Revenue estate of Chahal, Batala and Misarpur
70	Gurdaspur	Batala	Pakhoke, Dera Baba Nanak	Darbar Sahib Dera Baba Nanak	Tehsil of Batala
71	Gurdaspur	Batala	Talwara	Damdama Sahib	Revenue estate of Srigobindpur
72	Gurdaspur	Batala	Pakhoke Dera Baba Nanak	Chole Sahib (Including langar Mandar Chola Sahib)	Zail of Singpur
73	Gurdaspur	Batala	Teja Khurd	Teja	Tehsil of Batala
74	Gurdaspur	Batala	Othian	Othian	Zails of Bhular, Dholpur and Marar
75	Gurdaspur	Gurdaspur	Fateh Nangal	Burj sahib	Revenue estate of Fateh Nangal, Rania and Dhariwal(mills)
76	Gurdaspur	Gurdaspur	Gurdaspur	Jhulna Mahal	Revenue estate of Gurdaspur, Shahzada Nangal and Kotli Nangal
77	Gurdaspur	Gurdaspur	Dhariwal	Gurdwara Dhariwal	Revenue estates of Gurdas Nangal, Sobal and Dhariwal
78	Gurdaspur	Gurdaspur	Bhumbli	Bhumbli	Revenue estates of Bhumbli, Alawalpur and Babri Nangal
79	Gurdaspur	Shakargarh	Kot Naina	Darbar Kot Naina	Zails of Sujawal and Kot Bachua
80	Gurdaspur	Shakargarh	Doda	Kartarpur Sahib	Tehsil of Batala. Gurdaspur, Shakargarha and Narowal
81	Gurdaspur	Pathankot	Bharat Labri	Darbar Sahib Bharat	Tehsil of Pathankot
82	Sialkot	Sialkot	Sialkot City	Babe di Beri	Tehsil of Sialkot
83	Sialkot	Sialkot	Sialkot	Shahi Bunga	Tehsil of Sialkot
84	Sialkot	Sialkot	Sialkot City	Baoli Sahib	Municipal Area of Sialkot
85	Sialkot	Sialkot	Salehpur	Tahle Sahib	Revenue estate of Salehpur
86	Sialkot	Daska	Sahowala	Gurdwara Nanaksar	Revenue estate of Sahowala
87	Sialkot	Daska	Galotian	Darbar Sahib Guru Har Rai Sahib	Revenue estates of Galotian Khurd and Sabho Sarai
88	Sialkot	Daska	Sihoke	Gurdwara Nanakana Sahib	Revenue Estate of Sihoke
89	Sialkot	Farowal	Nunar	Nunar	Zails of Dhanthal and Belarpur
90	Gujaranwala	Gujaranwala	Eminabad	Roh...	Tehsil of Gujranwala
91	"	"	Eminabad	Chakki Sahib	"
92	"	"	Chak	Dera Baba Parana	Revenue estate of Chak Ram Das
93	"	"	Mattu Bhaike	Gurdwara Mattu Bhaik	Police St. area of Naushara Vikran
94	"	Wazirabad	Wazirabad	Guru Hota	Police St. areas of Sadar Wazirabad
95	"	Wazirabad	Wazirabad	Dharamshala Bhai Abnasa Singh	Tehsil of Wazirabad
96	"	Hafizabad	Bache Nau	Badhe Nau	Tehsil of Hafizabad
97	"	Hafizabad	Hafizebad	Chhevin Padshahi	"
98	Sheikhupur	Sheikhupura	Chuhar Kana	Sacha Sauda (or Khara Sauda)	Tehsil of Sheikhupura and Nankana Sahib
99	Sheikhupur	Shahdara	Nangal Sadhan	Nangal Sadhan	Zails of Kot Pindi Das, Muridke and Net

100	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Janam Asthan	As prescribed in section 85
101	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Gurdwara Bal Lila	"
102	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Kiara Sahib	"
103	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Mal Ji Sahib	"
104	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Chhevin Padhahi	"
105	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Nankana Sahib	Tambu Sahib	"
106	Sheikhupur	Nankana Sahib	Haft Madar	Gurdwara haft Madar	Zail of Kila Dharm Singh
107	Gujarat	Gujarat	Gujarat	Chhevin Padshahi	Tehsil of Gujarat
108	Gujarat	Phalia	Mangat	Bhai Bano Ji	Tehsil of Phalia
109	Gujarat	Phalia	Ker Bawa	Ker Bawa Wali	Tehsil of Phalia
110	Attock	Attock	Hassan Abdal	Punjab Sahib	As Prescribed in Sec-85
111	Jhelum	Jhelum	Rakh Rohtas	Choha Sahib	Tehsil of Jhelum
112	Shahpur	Sargodha	Chak 127 SB	Guru Sar	Revenue estates of Chak 127, Chak 128, Chak 131, Chak 129 S.B
113	Montgomery	Montgomery	Chak 103-7/R	Nanaksar (or Dera Baba Nanak)	Police Station area of Harappa
114	Montgomery	Montgomery	Kamalia	Prem Sati	Police Station area of Kamalia
115	Montgomery	Pakpattan	Nanaksar	Nanaksna Sahib	Zails of Pattan Kumariwala and Malerkataru
116	Montgomery	Dipalpur	Dipalpur	Gurdwara Pahli Padshahi	Zails of Dipalpur and Maneheria
117	Montgomery	Okara	Nankana Jagir	Nankana Sahib	Zails of Kamas and Satgarhi
118	Hoshiarpur	Una	Anandpur	Sri Takhat Kesgarh Sahib	As prescribed in Sec-85
119	Hoshiarpur	Una	Tarapur	Taragarh	The same as prescribed for no.120
120	Hoshiarpur	Una	Anandpur	Navin Padshani Guru Teg Bahadur	As prescribed in Sec-85
121	Hoshiarpur	Una	Anandpur	Bhora Sahib	"
122	Hoshiarpur	Una	Anandpur	Damdama Sahib	"
123	Hoshiarpur	Una	Anandpur	Qila Anandgarh Sahib	"
124	Hoshiarpur	Una	Anandpur	Charan Kanwal	"
125	Hoshiarpur	Una	Lodipur	Lohgarh	The same as prescribed for no.120
126	Hoshiarpur	Una	Basali	Basali	"
127	Hoshiarpur	Una	Chak	Holgarh	"
128	Hoshiarpur	Una	Agampur	Mata Jito Ji	"
129	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Baba Gurditta Ji	"
130	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Shish Mahal	"
131	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Takhat Sahib	"
132	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Manji Sahib	"
133	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Hari Mandir Sahib	"
134	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Patalpuri	"
135	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kiratpur	Babangarh	"
136	Hoshiarpur	Una	Bhabaur	Gurplah	"
137	Hoshiarpur	Una	Bathu	Kalmot	"
138	Hoshiarpur	Una	Kalmot	Chandpur	"
139	Hoshiarpur	Una	Chandpur	Jandberi	"
140	Hoshiarpur	Una	Jandberi	Gurna Sahib	"

141	Hoshiarpur	Dasuya	Bodal	Gurna Sahib	Police Station areas of Dasuya and Tande
142	Hoshiarpur	Hoshiarpur	Waddi Lehli	Jand Sahib	Revenue estate of Lehli
143	Hoshiarpur	Hoshiarpur	Bajraur	Harian Welau	Zail of Pandori Bibi
144	Hoshiarpur	Hoshiarpur	Bhungarni	Bhungarni	Revenue estate of Bhungarni
145	Hoshiarpur	Hoshiarpur	Purhiran	Zahira Zahur	Revenue estates of Purhiran Khawaspur (Piplanwala) Dhakkwal, Hoshiarpur and Bilaspur
146	Hoshiarpur	Garhshankar	Gondpur	Tahil Sahib	Revenue estates of Condpur, Sarhala, Khurd, Nangal Kalan and Daduwal Khera
147	Jullundur	Phillaur	Man	Man	Zails of Mainwal and Phillaur
148	Jullundur	Nawanshahr	Pharala	Gurdwara Guru Har Rai Sahib	Revenue estate of Pharala
149	Jullundur	Nawanshahr	Chak Guru	Gur Palah	Revenue estate of Chak Guru
150	Jullundur	Nawanshahr	Hakimpur	Nanaksar	Revenue estate of Hakimpur
151	Jullundur	Nawanshahr	Jindwal	Charan Kanwal	Revenue estates of Banga Jindwal and Sotran
152	Jullundur	Nawanshahr	Sotran	Sotran	“
153	Jullundur	Nawanshahr	Durgapur	Durgapur	Revenue Estate of Durgapur
154	Ludhiana	Ludhiana	Gajarwal	Manji Sahib	P.St. area of Dehlon
155	Ludhiana	Ludhiana	Gujarwal	Guru Granth Sahib	P.St. area of Dehlon
156	Ludhiana	Ludhiana	Alamgir	Gurdwara Alamgir	Zail of Dhandari
157	Ludhiana	Ludhiana	Kanech	Kanech	Zail of Sahnewal
158	Ludhiana	Samarala	Machhiwara	Kanwal Sahib	Revenue estate of Machhiwara and Lidheran
159	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Mohi	Mohi	Zail of Mohi
160	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Silowani	Guru Govind Singh Sahib	Zail of Raikot
161	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Raikot	Tahlian Sahib	Zails of Raikot and Basian
162	Ludhiana	Samralla	Chuharpur	Jhar Sahib	Police St. area of Machhiwara
163	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Sidhwan Kalan	Sri Guru Gobind Singh	Revenue estates of Siodhwan kalan and Jandi
164	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Sadhar	Sri Guru Gobind Singh and Chhevin Padshahi	Zail of Akalgarh
165	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Lama Jatpura	Lama Jatpura	Tehsil of Jagraon
166	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Chakar	Guru Sar	Zail of Mallah
167	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Kaonke Kalan	“	Zail of Kaonke
168	Ludhiana	Jagraon	Hehran	Hehran	Ludhiana Distt.
169	Ferozepur	Ferozepur	Bazidpur	Guru Ser Bazidpur	M.C area of Ferozpore & revenue estate of Bazidpur, Bani Gulab Singh, Bangar, Shakar, Ratti Khera and Dhindsa
170	Ferozepur	Ferozepur	Chak Fateh Singh	Gurdwara Guru Gobind Singh	Revenue estate of Chak Fateh Singh, Chak Ram Singh and Chak Baketu
171	Ferozepur	Ferozepur	Nathana	Guru Sar	Revenue estate of Nathana

172	Ferozepur	Feozepur	Mehraj	Guru Sar	Police Station area of Nathana
173	Ferozepur	Moga	Daroli Bhai	Dhera Daroli Bhai	Revenue eatate of Daroli Bhai
174	Ferozepur	”	Lopon	Guru Sar	Revenue estate of Lopon
175	Ferozepur	”	Madoke	Madoke	Revenue estate of Madoke
176	Ferozepur	”	Wada Ghar	Chhevin Padshahi	Revenue estate of Wada Ghar and Chhota Ghar
177	Ferozepur	”	Tahktupura and Nanaksar	Gurdwara Daswin Padshahi	Police St. area of Nihal Singhwala
178	Ferozepur	”	Mahdevki	Pakka Sahib	Revenue estate of Mahdevki
179	Ferozepur	”	Dina	Lohgarh Sahib	Tehsil of Moga
180	Ferozepur	”	Patto Hira Singh	Guru Sar	Revenue estate of Patto Hira Singh
181	Ferozepur	”	Salina	Guru Sar	Revenue estate of Salina
182	Ferozepur	”	Dagru	Tambu Mal	Revenue estate of Dagru
183	Ferozepur	”	Mehron	Mehron	Revenue Estate of Mehroti
184	Ferozepur	”	Banbiha Bhai	Nanak Sar	Revenue estate of Banbiha Bhai
185	Ferozepur	”	Wandar	Guru Gobind Singh	Revenue estate of Wandar
186	Ferozepur	”	Smadh Bhai	Gurudwara Guru Granth Sahib, Mohtamin Prem Das	Police Station area of Bagha Purana
187	Ferozepur	”	Mari Mustafa	Mari Mustafa	Revenue estate of Mari Mustafa
188	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Muktsar	Darbar Sahib	As prescribed in Section 85
189	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Muktsar	Tambu Sahib	”
190	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Muktsar	Shahid Ganj	”
191	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Muktsar	Tibbi Sahib	”
192	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Sarai	Pahli Padshahi and Dusri Padshahi	Zail of Varing
193	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Rupana	Guru Sar	Revenue estate of Rupana
194	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Guru Sar	”	Revenue estate of Gur Sar
195	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Thehari	Guru Gobind Singh	Revenue estate of Thehari
196	Ferozepur	Muktsar	Chhatiana	Guptsar and Sahib Chand	Revenue estate of Chhatiana and Sahib Chand
197	Ferozepur	Zira	Khosa Kotla	Guru Sar	Revenue estate of Khosa Kotla, Khosa Randhir and Khosa Pando
198	Ferozepur	”	Seneri	Guru Sar	Revenue estae of Saneri
199	Ferozepur	”	Thatha	Chhevin Padshahi	Revenue estate of Thatha
200	Ferozepur	Gujar	Narali	”	Revenue estate of Narali
201	Hissar	Sirsa	Sirsa	Gurdwara Guru Gobind Singh	Tehsil of Sirsa
202	Hissar	Sirsa	Dabwali	Guru Asthan Dabwali	Revenue estate of Dabwali
203	Hissar	Sirsa	Kewal	Kewal	Revenue estate of Kewal

204	Hissar	Fatehabad	Ratia	Ratia	P.St area of Ratia
205	Rohtak	Rohtak	Rohtak	Bangla Sahib (excluding temples of goddess Sitla and Manji Sahib)	Tehsil of Rohtak
206	Rohtak	Gohana	Lakhan Mazra	Manji Sahib	Tehsil of Rohtak & Gohana
207	Karnal	Karnal	Karnal	Manji Sahib	Distt. Of Karnal
208	Karnal	Thanesar	Thanesar	Sidh Ratti	"
209	Karnal	Thanesar	Thanesar	Chhevin Padshahi	"
210	Karnal	Thanesar	Thanesar	Navin Padshahi	"
211	Karnal	Thanesar	Thanesar	Satvi Padshahi	"
212	Karnal	Thanesar	Thanesar	Dasvi Padshahi	"
213	Karnal	Thanesar	Thanesar	Dasvin Padshahi	"
214	Karnal	Thanesar	Bani Badarpur	Guru Teg Bahadur	Tehsil of Thanesar
215	Ambala	Ambala	Ambala City	Sis Ganj	Ambala Municipal Corp.
216	Ambala	Ambala	Ambala City	Dasvin Padshahi Labhuwala	"
217	Ambala	Ambala	Ambala City	Dasvin Padshahi	"
218	Ambala	Ambala	Ambala City	Manji Sahib	"
219	Ambala	Ambala	Ambala City	Mohalla Mehr Dhumini	"
220	Ambala	Ambala	Panjokhra	Guru Har Kishan Sahib	Revenue estate of Panjokhra, Barnala, Garna, Janetpur
221	Ambala	Ambala	Mardon	Mardon	Revenue estates of Tharwah, Majri Mardon and Kallar Heri
222	Ambala	Ambala	Bhanon Kheri	Guru Gobind Singh Sahib	Revenue estate of Bhanon Kheri
223	Ambala	Ambala	Sular	Sular	Revenue estate of Sular and Blana
224	Ambala	Ambala	Chhani	Gurdwara Chhani	Revenue estate of Langar Chhani and Kesri
225	Ambala	Narain Garh	Raipur	Ranike Raipur and Manak Tabra	Revenue estate of Raipur & Manak Tabra
226	Ambala	Jagadhri	Bilaspur	Gurdwara Guru Gobind Singh Sahib in Gopal Mochan	Revenue estate of Dariapur Choli, Basantianwala, Dharamkot, ambwala, chagnaoli, Machroi & Bilaspur
227	Ambala	Jagadhri	Bilaspur	Bilaspur Gurdwara	Zail of Bilaspur
228	Ambala	Jagadhri	Jagadhri	Gurdwara Jagadhri	Zail of Jagadhri
229	Ambala	Jagadhri	Balachaur	Agampura	Revenue estate of Balachaur
230	Ambala	Jagadhri	Sudhal	Sudhal	Revenue estate of Sudhal
231	Ambala	Rupar	Chamkaur	Gurdwaras of Dhamdam Sahib Katalgarh , Tilak Asthan	Police Station area of Morinda
232	Ambala	Rupar	Kotla Nihang	Bhatta Sahib	Zail of Kotla Nihang
233	Ambala	"	Rupar	Rupar	Zail of Rupar
234	Ambala	"	Morinda	Morinda	Revenue estates of Morinda, Marauli Kalan, Dhangrili and Rangyam
235	Ambala	"	Bur Majra	Bur Majra	Revenue estates of Bur Majra, Dhanauri, Kainapur and Sehar Majra.
236	Ambala	"	Bir Guru	Jand Sahib	Zail of Bela

237	Ambala	”	Saheri	Saheri	Revenue estates of Saheri, Rangilpur, Dhangrali and Kainaur
238	Ambala	Kharar	Mani Majra	Manji Sahib	Zail of Chandigarh
239	Ambala	Kharar	Khidrabad	Khidrabad (Gurdwara Baba Zorawar Singh)	Zail of Khurali and Khidrabad
240	Jhang	Jhang	Nanaksar	Gurdwara Nanaksar	Tehsil of Jhang
241	Multan	Multan	Multan City	Dharamshals Bhai Dyalji	Municipal Area of Multan and the tehsil of Kabirwala <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M L Ahluwalia.(ed.); *Select Documents, Gurdwara Reform Movement 1919-1925, an era of Congress- Akali Collaboration*, Ashoka International publishers, New Delhi, 1985, p. 346-360; Also see, *The Punjab Local Acts 1825-1988*, Vol. XI, Punjab Law Agency, Chd., 1988, pp. 400-409, 519-535, 536-538; *Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925*, S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1934 (Rare Book Section, No. R-834, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, pp. 91-95; *Gurdwara Kanoon, Arthat Act No. 1925*, Rare Book Section R 1333, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, pp. 121-125; *Gurdwara Gazette, Lahore 1931*, (April , May, June, July, August, October, November, December), Sikh Reference Library, Golden Temple, Amritsar, R. No. 2864. "No Such Petition shall be entertained in respect of any institution specified in schedule I or schedule II unless the institution is deemed to be excluded from specification in schedule I under the provision of section 4". *The Punjab Local Acts, 1825 -1988*, Vol. XI, Punjab Law Agency, Chandigarh, p. 408; The list of Gurdwaras from no. 241-415 which were added later on can be seen in, *The Punjab Local Acts, 1825 -1988*, Vol. XI pp. 525-535.



## APPENDIX IV

### AKHARAS WHICH WERE NOT TO BE DECLARED GURDWARAS UNLESS THEY FULFILLED CERTAIN CONDITIONS

#### SCHEDULE – II (See Section-7)

S.No.	District	Revenue Estate	Name of Institution
1	Lahore	Lahore City	Dera Baba Bela Singh
2	Lahore	Lamme Jagir	Dera Pandit Gurmukh Singh
3	Lahore	Liddhar	Dera Bhai Parshotam Singh
4	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Sanotkh Das Mahant Brahm Dutt
5	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Bala Nand
6	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Pritam Das or Nirban Katra
7	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Kanshiwala, inside Sultanwind Gate
8	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Beriwal
9	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Chatterwal
10	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Chitta
11	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Nirban Bawa Tehldas
12	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Kanihiwala Ghi Mandi
13	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Bibeksar
14	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Akhara Sangalwala
15	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Mahant Misra Singh
16	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Thakran
17	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Antarjamian
18	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Bhai Parduman Singh
19	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Nirmal Chhetar
20	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Mahant Gurmukh Singh
21	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Panchian
22	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Mahant Bahawal Singh
23	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Giani Bakshish Singh
24	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Mahant Basant Singh
25	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Baba Budh Singh
26	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Sainlok Ram Singh
27	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Warianwala
28	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Baba Joga Singh
29	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Bhai Sewa Singh
30	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dharamshala Mai Sarsati
31	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Chattewala
32	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dharamsala Brahm Huzura Opposite Akhara Balanand
33	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dharamsala Bawa Rattan Hari
34	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dharamsala Baba Mela Ram
35	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dharamsala Baba Har Dass
36	Amritsar	Amritsar City	Dera Gyani Bebek Singh

37	Amritsar	Taran Taran	Dera Bhai Tara Singh
38	Gurdaspur	Shankarpur	Dera Sant Mohan Singh
39	Gurdaspur	Qadian	Dera Sant Nihal Singh
40	Gurdaspur	Batala	Dera Bagh Bawa Saran Das
41	Sailkot	Bahadur Pura	Sadh Akhar Sukh Ram Dass
42	Sheikhpura	Warn	Dera Ganga Ram
43	"	Mrowal	Dharamsala Narain Dass
44	"	Shahdara	Dera Bhai Mehteb Singh
45	Gujrat	Mangat	Dera Rocha Singh
46	"	"	Dera Partap Singh
47	"	Sohawa Bolani	Dera Charan Dass
48	"	Dhal Tibi Tannan, Nauth Dingah	Dera Mahant Bashambar Parshad
49	"	Sara Alamgir	Dera Sahiban
50	"	Dingah	Mandar Udasian
51	"	Murala	Dera Mahant Prem Dass
52	"	Shahdiwal	Samadi Bhagat Larinda Mal
53	"	Nanwan Nazul	Samadi Bawa Mansa Ram
54	"	"	Samadi Bawa Tappa
55	"	Bhakhariali	Samadi Bawa Sundar Das.
56	"	Jalapur Jattan	Samadi Bawa Gobind Bakhsh
57	Rawalpindi	Rawalpindi City	Dera Baba Mohan Das
58	"	"	Darbar Narankarian
59	"	Thoha Khalsa	Dukh Bhanjani or Dera Bhai Singh
60	"	"	Dera Baba Mast Ram or Makan of Barandard
61	"	Gauj Mandi Rawalpindi City	Dera Mahant Nand Singh
62	"	Sukho	Dera Mahant Jowahir Singh
63	Attock	Shakardara	Gurdwara Shakardara
64	Jhelum	Mangol	Dera Mahant Amar Singh
65	"	Mahal Chahi	Dera Takhran
66	Jhang	Maghiana	Gurdwara Bawa Gobind Das
67	"	"	Gurdwara Bhai Nand Singh
68	Montgomery	Bhajangarh	Dera Sant Singh
69	Multan	Multan city Taref Juma Khalsa	Asthan Deopura
70	Hoshiarpur	Bhadurpur	Dera Baba Charan Shah
71	Hoshiarpur	Daffar	Dhakki
72	Hoshiarpur	Khuddah	Dehra
73	Hoshiarpur	Tanda	Mastgarh
74	Hoshiarpur	Tooto Mazara	Dharmshala
75	Hoshiarpur	Malli	Chini Chati
76	Jullundur	Alawalpur	Dera Maru Das
77	Ludhiana	Bhaini	Bhaini Sahib
78	Ludhiana	Baraich	Dera Gur Parshad

79	Ludhiana	Gurah	Dera Puran Das
80	Ferozapore	Smadh Bhai	Dera Guru granth Sahib, Gurkukh Das Mohtamin
81	Ferozapore	Bholia Khurd	Dera Bhai Gulab Singh
82	Ferozapore	Nathuwala	Dera Bhai Bhajan Singh
83	Ferozapore	Doadar	Dera Bhai Mangal Singhwala
84	Ferozapore	Rania	Dera Bhal Khalak Singh
85	Ferozapore	Muktsar	Dera Bhai Mastan Singh
86	Ferozapore	Karika Kalan	Dera Bhai Ran Singh
87	Ferozapore	Sekhwan	Dera Sekhwan
88	Hissar	Rohri	Dera Mahant Bishudhanand
89	Hissar	Kewal	Dera Kewal
90	Hissar	Kalanwali	Dera Kalanwali
91	Hissar	Takhtmal	Dera Mahant Chhetanand
92	Karnal	Shahabad	Dera Sadh Charan Das, Devi Tal
93	Karnal	Thanesar	Bara Akhara, Kurukshetra
94	Karnal	Thanesar	Chhota Akhara, Kurukshetra
95	Karnal	Thanesar	Dera Kumerwala (Known as Dera Mahant Sampuran Singh)
96	Karnal	Sirsala	Dera Sadh Charan Das
97	Karnal	Fatehgarh Jharauli	Dera Fatehgarh Jharauli
98	Karnal	Lakhmari	Dera Bishan Das Sadh
99	Karnal	Sagri	Dera Asthal Ram Kishan Sadh
100	Karnal	Ladwa	Dera Bawa Prem Das
101	Karnal	Kanipla	Dera Sadh Jamna Das
102	Karnal	Khurdban	Dera Udasian
103	Karnal	Umri	Dera Udasian
104	Karnal	Bapdi	Dera Harnam Das Sadh
105	Karnal	Jogi Mazra	Dera Sadhni
106	Karnal	Khera Sudhpur	Dera Sadh Lachhman Das
107	Karnal	Bapauli	Dera Sadh Mohan Das
108	Karnal	Mehra	Dera Sadhni
109	Karnal	Nalvi Mahman Singh	Dera Nirmala Sikh
110	Karnal	Pehowa	Dera Mahant Charan Das (Known as Chhota Akhara)
111	Karnal	Pehowa	Dera Mahant Charan Das (Known as Chhota Akhara)
112	Karnal	Pehowa	Dera Mahant Thaman Das (Known as Dera Nirmala)
113	Karnal	Arnauli	Dera Udasian
114	Karnal	Arnauli	Dera Nirmala Sikhan, Bhagal
115	Karnal	Shamgarh	Dera Udasian
116	Karnal	Fatehgarh	Dera Prem Das <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> M L Ahluwalia.(ed); *Select Documents, Gurdwara Reform Movement 1919-1925, an era of Congress- Akali Collaboration*, Ashoka International publishers, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 360-364: Also see *The Punjab Local Acts 1825-1988*, Vol. XI, Punjab Law Agency, Chd., 1988, pp. 400-409, 519-535, 536-538; *Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925*, S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1934 (Rare Book Section, No. R-834, GNDU, Amritsar, pp. 91-95; *Gurdwara Kanooon, Arthat Act No. 1925*, Rare Book Section R 1333, GNDU, Amritsar, pp. 121-125; *Gurdwara Gazette, Lahore 1931*, (April, May, June, July, August, October, November, December), Sikh Reference Library, Golden Temple, Amritsar, R. No. 2864. "No Such Petition shall be entertained in respect of any institution specified in schedule I or schedule II unless the institution is deemed to be excluded from specification in schedule I under the provision of section 4". *The Punjab Local Acts, 1825 -1988*, Vol. XI, Punjab Law Agency, Chandigarh, p. 408.

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